Liberty

MAY 8, 1943 10c

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U.S. COAST GUARD
CORSAIRS
ELDON
GR

BOOK:
NIGHT SHIFT
by
Maritta Wolff

LIBERTY

RAYMOND CLAPPER
writes on
Presidential
Possibilities for '44

LIBERTY

First of a Series
on
Post-War Living
by
Morris Markey

LIBERTY

THE SAGA OF A FLYING FORTRESS
by her crew

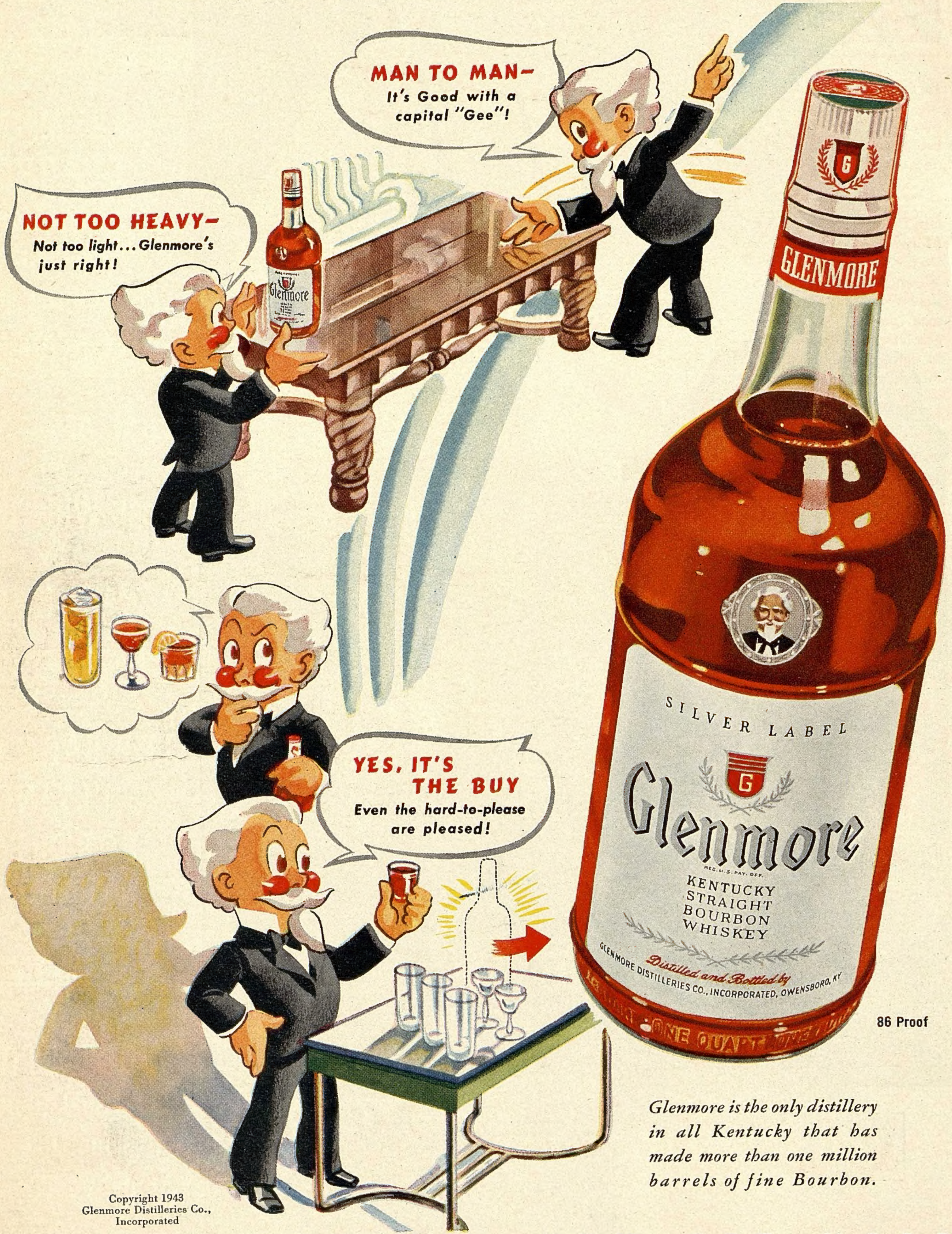
LIBERTY

SHORT STORIES
by Noel Houston
Joel Reeve
Madeline Thompson

In this issue: Full-Color Portrait of Lt. Gen. Holcomb of the Marines

To make your next drink smoother...

MAKE YOUR NEXT DRINK GLENMORE


MAN TO MAN– It's Good with a capital "Gee"!
NOT TOO HEAVY– Not too light... Glenmore's just right!
Glenmore
YES, IT'S THE BUY Even the hard-to-please are pleased!
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REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY
Distilled and Bottled by
GLENMORE DISTILLERIES CO., INCORPORATED, OWENSBORO, KY.
ONE QUART ONE QUART

86 Proof

Glenmore is the only distillery in all Kentucky that has made more than one million barrels of fine Bourbon.

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POUR GLENMORE . . YOU GET MORE

"Rationing sure puts the SPOTLIGHT on TIRE VALUE!"

ACCESSORIES
GOODYEAR TIRES

I'VE been a Goodyear dealer for twenty years, but I've never seen customers so enthused over Goodyear quality as during this past year.

Fact is, since rationing made it compulsory to keep tab on mileage, folks are discovering that Goodyear tires live up to every promise we dealers make—*and then some!*

A case from Rhode Island

For instance, there's Mr. Charles A. Aldrich, 34 Brewster Drive, Hoxsie, R. I. On his car he now has two Goodyear All-Weathers that have traveled 45,303 miles since October 1939. And they're still in such good condition—as the photograph shows—his tire inspector told him to drive them another 5,000 miles before recapping.

Exceptional? Not at all. You'd be surprised how many motorists report their Goodyears are still running after 40,000 to 60,000 miles' service. With a Goodyear Extra-Mileage Recap many of these tires will continue to give good service for a long, long time.

A tip on synthetic tires

Right now, all Goodyear's engineering skill is devoted to producing synthetic tires for military use. But the day is coming when the public will be able to buy tires of the same high quality built of Chemigum—Goodyear's own synthetic.

Until then, you'll find it pays to take care of your present Goodyears—by having them inspected regularly—by following wartime driving rules.* Give your Goodyears a chance to show how good they are and you'll join the host that's saying, *"As soon as I can buy new tires again, you can bet they will be Goodyears!"*

***Wartime Driving Rules for Maximum Mileage**

(**1**) Drive under 35 miles per hour (**2**) Drive only when necessary (**3**) Keep tires inflated to 32 pounds (**4**) Avoid sudden stops and starts (**5**) Avoid bruising your tires (**6**) Share your car with your neighbor (**7**) Have your tires inspected regularly.

Regular tire maintenance service costs little under the Goodyear Tire-Life Extension Plan. Ask your dealer.

FROM OUR GALLERY OF GOODYEAR VETERANS

45,303 MILES YOUNG!

Here you see how Mr. Aldrich's two Goodyear All-Weathers look after three and a half years' steady use. Note the amount of tread still left, enough for many thousands of miles. No wonder he says, "You can be sure my postwar car will be equipped with Goodyears."

GARDEN V FOR VICTORY

America is short on food—
PLANT A VICTORY GARDEN

GOODYEAR
THE GREATEST NAME IN RUBBER

All-Weather, Chemigum (pronounced Kem-i-gum)
—T. M.'s The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

the one and only!

. . . sweet or dry
SWEET
SWEET
VERMOUTH
Dubonnet

Race horses or Vermouth—blood lines will tell. Vermouth by Dubonnet is a Vermouth backed by a great quality tradition. Everything the 97-year-old name "Dubonnet" stands for is in this Vermouth . . . highest quality ingredients and the skill to blend them to perfection.

☛ *Write for free "Smart Drink Guide", Dubonnet Corp., 350 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C.*

VERMOUTH by Dubonnet

Product of the U. S. A., bottled by Dubonnet Corporation, Lodi, California

Tune in! *"Alec Templeton Time" 10:30—10:35 p. m. (e. w. t.) Blue Network, Monday, Wednesday, Friday.*

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COVER: JOHN WHEELDO. .S.C.G.R.

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Liberty
NEXT WEEK

ARE YOU *SURE* YOU CAN'T HAVE CHILDREN?

From the days of Abraham, who mourned because Sarah was without child, to the eighteenth-century quacks who hired out nuptial beds which in some mysterious manner supposedly made barren wives conceive—right down to our own day and age, when married couples fret over their childless unions—the subject of sterility has been at least partially unanswered. There are answers, however, to many of the questions that commonly bother us in private. Liberty has asked Dr. Albert Hemming to give us some of them. Watch for his enlightening article next week.

THE TRUTH ABOUT WILLOW RUN

Millions of words have been written and spoken about Willow Run—the production giant that sprawls on the face of Michigan. We've wondered what kind of place it is, and what some of its problems are. Who could know the answers better than Earl Godwin, the Blue Network's oracle who broadcasts for Mr. Ford every night? Certainly Mr. Godwin knew the inside lane to Willow Run, and he was glad to make a special trip to the plant, so he could tell Liberty readers the story. Read it next week.

FATHERS IN THE DRAFT

Where do you stand in the draft? And do you honestly think you'll not be tapped because you're a father? You can figure your own answers here and now, because the odds favor your induction. But what about your family, your wife and kids? What will life be for them without your paternal guidance? Answers to those posers are not easily found. Leo M. Cherne will give you an idea of what's to come in next week's issue.

THE BARGAIN BOOK NEXT WEEK

will be I Served on Bataan, the real-life thriller of an army nurse, Lieutenant Juanita Redmond. And if you want a wonderful pin-up picture of Admiral Nimitz you can have the portrait by McClelland Barclay.
It's a full package of reading enjoyment, complete with cartoons and your favorite departments.

4th YEAR—
marching on!

OSCAR SERLIN *presents* Clarence Day's

LIFE WITH FATHER

Made into a play by HOWARD LINDSAY *and* RUSSEL CROUSE
with
DOROTHY STICKNEY and HOWARD LINDSAY
Directed by Bretaigne Windust *Setting and Costumes by Stewart Chaney*

EMPIRE THEATRE, New York

Now on 2nd transcontinental tour
LIFE WITH FATHER *with* PERCY WARAM • JUNE WALKER

Presenting—ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST RADIO SHOWS!

"FAMOUS FATHERS"

Inspired by the Broadway Hit "LIFE WITH FATHER"
HOWARD LINDSAY
AS MASTER OF CEREMONIES
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See your Local Newspaper for Time and Station in Your City

★ VOX POP ★

"The Voice of the People"

TED SHANE NEWS

CHICAGO, ILL.—There are four of us who each buy a Liberty every week it contains a Ted Shane puzzle—then we time ourselves to see who completes it fastest.

Please give us a puzzle every week.—*Mrs. Jack Macdonald.*

Dear lady, we hear and we obey. From now on Ted will not only have a Cockeyed Crossword Puzzle in Liberty every other week, but on alternate weeks he will fill in with a brand-new kind of puzzle—a combination crossword and quiz known as a Quizz-ical Crossword. The first of these will appear in next week's issue.

HOW DRY I AM!

HONOLULU, T. H.—Mrs. Oren J. Cobb's letter (January 23 Vox Pop) gave me a good laugh. She says there hasn't been a bootlegger in her county for four years. What's the trouble? No bathtubs around?

Liquor is scarce out here and what little comes in lasts about as long as a snowball in hell. So, Mrs. Cobb, please don't try and enforce a minority's wishes upon the majority.

And besides, I doubt, Mrs. Cobb, if *you* know there is a war going on. We have a blackout every night and many more irritating things to endure, and I think we deserve a drink now and then, because it has a way of curing homesickness, knotted nerves caused by bloody battles, and that tired feeling caused by too much overtime.—*Clifford Stearns.*

THE LILY IS GILDED

GULFPORT, MISS.—I am a regular reader of Liberty and have been for several years. I must tell you what a great improvement it has shown in the past few months, with the old departments in it and also the book section. Now that it has had the book section added, it is in every way perfect, in my estimation. —*Henry L. Otis.*

Thank you for these kind words.

UNIONS FOREVER

AUGUSTA, GA.—What right have people to criticize unions as a whole simply because a few racketeers get into office?

Unions have made America the best country on earth to live in and I'd hate to think of living without them.—*W. E. Banks.*

SPREADING LIBERTY

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—Here is a remark made by William Allen White in the Emporia Gazette of October 24, 1940: "Liberty is the one thing you can't have unless you give it to others."

I think the above remark can describe Liberty Magazine.

I have subscribed to your new Liberty for two years. After I am through reading your magazine, I save it, then send a pack of them to a nephew of mine in the Air Corps. He says that the men can't wait until he's through with them and they go from one to another.—*Samuel Gentile.*

WE'LL TRY, SISTER

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—This is a threatening letter:

Give us more Devery Freeman—or else!

Lady on a Flagpole was *swell.* (February 27 Liberty.)—*Marjorie Chambers.*

STUDENTS IN THE ARMY

NEOSHO, MO.—Since Uncle Sam started drafting our eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds many of our high-school boys have been called from their classes.

I believe that all these boys, who were seniors at the time they were drafted, should be given diplomas by their respective school boards. A chair should be placed for them at the graduation exercises. If they cannot get a furlough to attend, one of their parents should be presented with the diploma.—*Mrs. D. T. Hetrick.*

NERTS!

WICHITA FALLS, TEX. — Concerning "globaloney" (April 3 Vox Pop): Nerts! with a capital N to Clare Boothe Luce. —*Elizabeth Naher.*

LANDLUBBERS!

DETROIT, MICH.—I read somewhere that there is a naval training station in the United States located miles inland —on a desert!

What kind of sailors can they train under such conditions? Put them on a ship and they will all get seasick.

The place to train sailors is on a ship at sea.—*George Hardwick.*

A GREMLIN DID IT

PINE BLUFF, ARK.—Oscar Schisgall should have a chance to see a Fairchild PT 19A—then explain how Lieutenant Rassiter in Lady with Wings (April 3 Liberty) could stand under its wing. Or maybe the lieutenant is a midget! You see—it's a low-wing monoplane.

Incidentally, I know about the Fairchilds because I've been instructing army cadets on them for the past six months.—*David Ostrich.*

LET 'EM HAVE FUN

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—I want to go on record as opposing soldiers and sailors —officers are the worst offenders—visiting night clubs and wasting their time and money drinking and watching floor shows.

Don't these men know there is a war going on and that Uncle Sam is paying them to fight and win it?

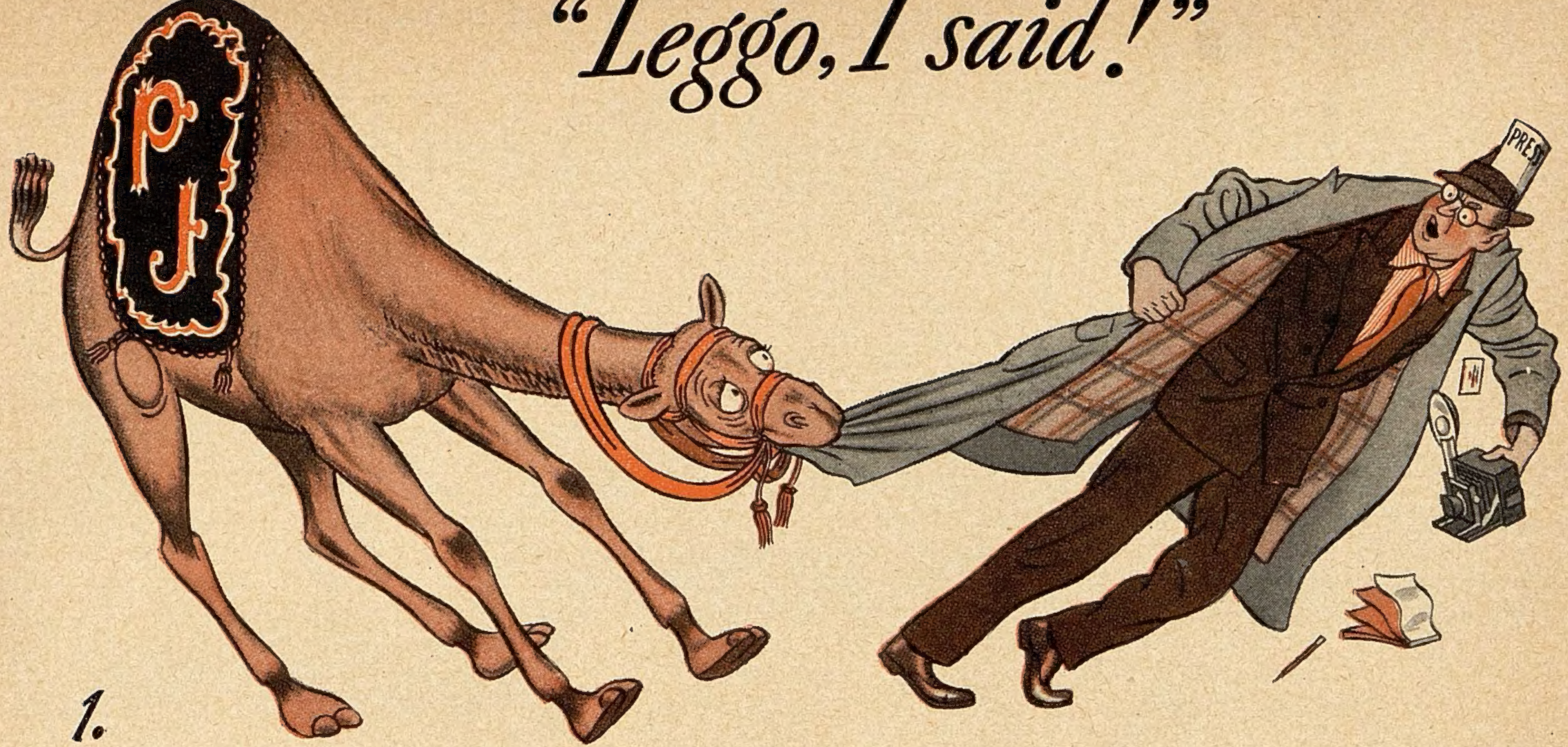
There should be a rule that men in uniform could not be admitted to such places "for the duration."—*R. C. Winston.*

PATRIOT WITHOUT UNIFORM

KANSAS CITY, MO.—Your Patriot Without Uniform articles are so good, I wonder why you don't make them a weekly feature. I'm sure every reader would welcome them.—*J. L. Thomson.*

We'd gladly run one every week, if we could get one. We hope to be able to, but meanwhile we'll run them as often as we can.

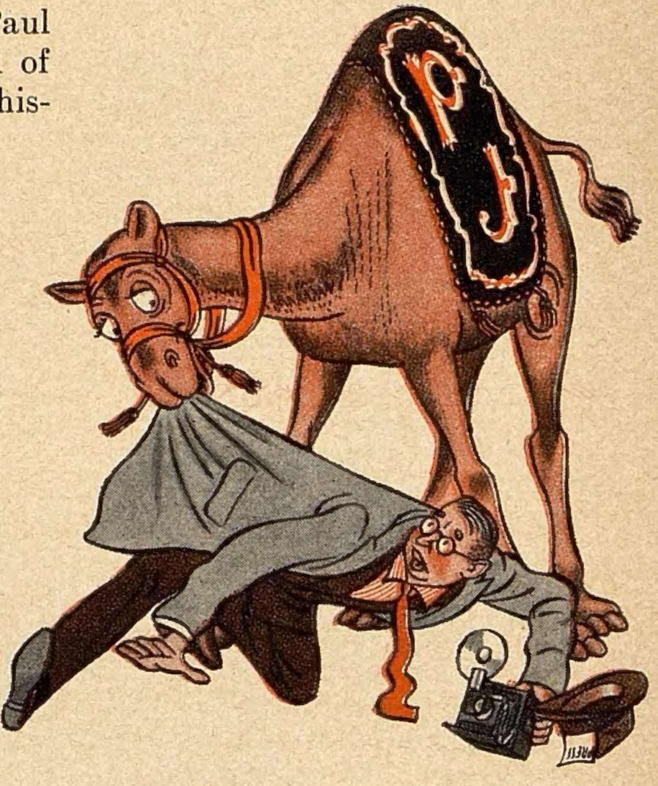
"Leggo, I said!"



1.

REPORTER: Awright, okay, I'm a reporter. But, please, Pal, I'm busy—City Hall's on fire, the bank's been robbed, somebody just blew up the postmaster, an' the mayor's running around biting dogs. So leggo the coat, Bub . . . *Leggo!*

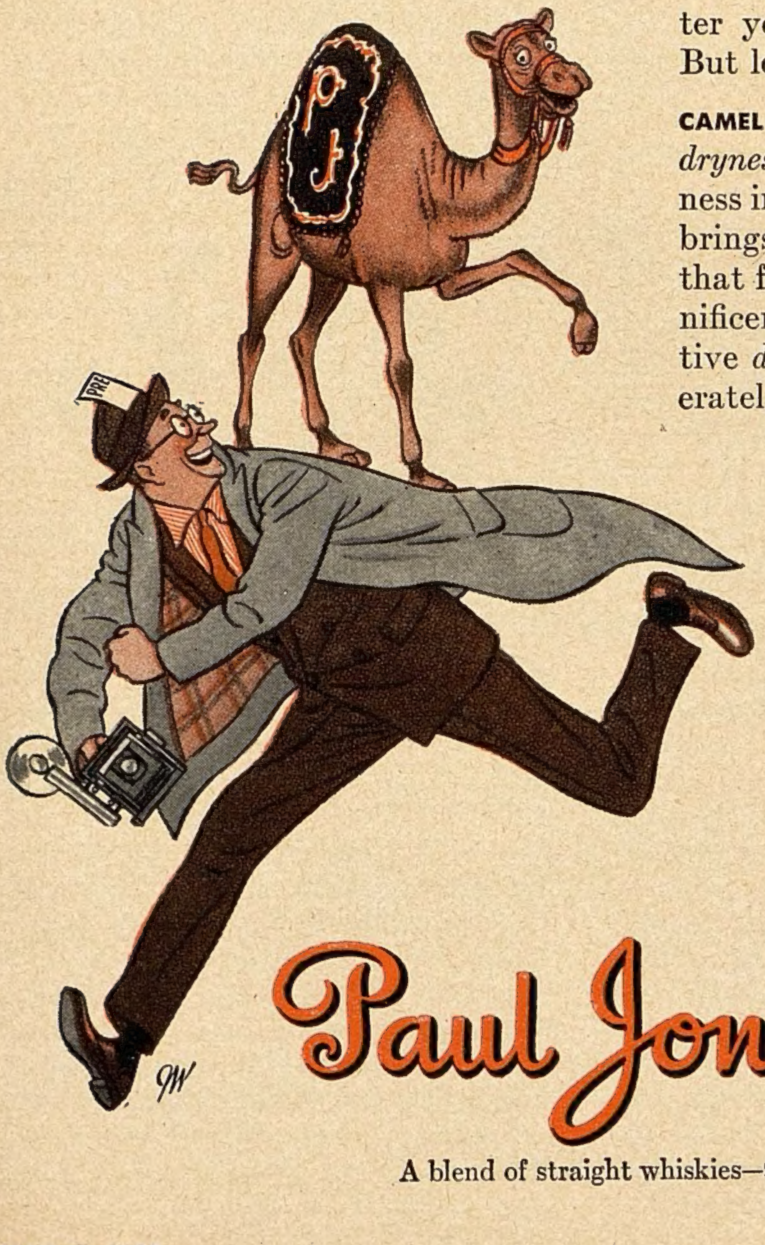
CAMEL: But, Pride of the Press, *I've* got news for you too! I'm the Paul Jones Camel! The living symbol of the *dryness* in dry Paul Jones whiskey and—



2.

REPORTER: *Jeepers!* Listen, you Bedouin Barnacle: leggo my coat and tomorrow I'll plaster you all over Page One! But leggo me *now!*

CAMEL: Will you say that this *dryness*, this lack of sweetness in the superb Paul Jones brings out *all* its flavor? And that for all Paul Jones' magnificence, for all its superlative *dryness*, it is most moderately priced?



3.

REPORTER: I'll tell 'em it's a *pearl* among whiskies! Listen! Did you say *moderately priced?* A *dry* whiskey *and* moderately priced?

CAMEL: Go to *any* liquor store, O Soon-to-be-Grateful! You'll find that dry Paul Jones is *most* moderately priced!

REPORTER: Well, for the luvva Mike! Say, I'm not only gonna put this on Page One. It's goin' in Society, Sports, and Letters to the Editor! So long, Chum! See you in the papers!

Paul Jones

DRY
Paul Jones
A Blend of Straight Whiskies

The very best ***buy***
is the whiskey that's ***dry***

A blend of straight whiskies—90 proof.

Frankfort Distilleries, Inc., Louisville & Baltimore

ORDERS IS ORDERS

BY S. T. WILLIAMSON

WHEN this story is told at the Navy Department in Washington, it does not need the preface that it is more typical than true. John M. Simpkins, professor of English at a small Iowa college, received a letter from a navy bureau. Would he, it asked, accept a commission as commander in the Naval Reserve and teach in an indoctrination school in North Carolina? He certainly would, replied Mr. Simpkins.

After he passed his physical examination and had bought a ready-made uniform, his commission arrived with directions to "await further orders." Some days later orders arrived: proceed to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and report for duty. They must have moved the school, thought Commander Simpkins.

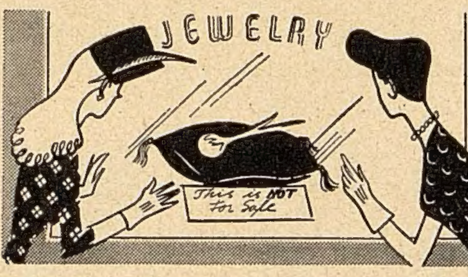
He presented his orders at Halifax. "We've been expecting you," he was told, and a navy car sped him to the docks and gangplank of a ship, where he was piped over the side and conducted to a cabin just off the bridge. Some one introducing himself as the executive officer said that it was time to cast off. The man from Iowa nodded.

Half an hour later Commander Simpkins made two alarming discoveries: the ship was at sea, and he, who never before had laid eyes on salt water, was the ship's captain. Telling the executive officer to carry on without him, he promptly took to his cabin and his bunk, and there he remained throughout two round trips over a badly behaving North Atlantic.

An American naval officer stood on the dock when the ship returned after its second voyage. He wore the three gold stripes of a commander, his face was red, and he looked very angry. He turned out to be Commander John W. Simpkins, U. S. N. R., a one-time master mariner of Gloucester, Massachusetts. Some gor-rammed grampus in Washington, he announced, had mixed up his orders, and he had spent the last five weeks at a landlubber school in North Carolina, trying to teach English.

WOMAN-TALK

YOU AND MRS. MINIVER: When the planning and contriving and stretching you have to do under rationing gets a bit irksome and you're tempted to grouse and feel sorry for yourself, just think of your prototype in England—Mrs. Miniver. She keeps house, too, but where you can get two pounds of meat for every member of your family, she has to get along on one. She has cheese—four ounces of it a week per person—but she can't beat up a cheese soufflé on a meatless night, because eggs are a rare luxury in the Minivers' lives. She can usually buy only from two to five a month. She gets two ounces of tea a week, and remember, tea to the Minivers is what coffee is to us—perhaps more so. Fruit is scarce and all canned fruit juices are reserved for children of five and under. Bread isn't rationed, but white bread is unobtainable. So are lemons and bananas. As for the onion, that humble bulb which can make a stew or a casserole of leftover vegetables into a gourmet's delight, it just isn't. A recent visitor to England reports that he saw only one while he was there. It was on a velvet cushion in a jeweler's window. A sign informed passers-by: THIS IS NOT FOR SALE.


JEWELRY
This is NOT For Sale

RETORT FINAL: Time was when a woman, by exercising a little care about recognizing old popular songs or by restraining her impulse to exclaim, "Oh, I saw that play during my last year at boarding school!" could shroud her exact age in decent mystery. Now, what with registering for this and that, and with the deadly truth—unless she had enough presence of mind to say, "Twenty-one plus"—emblazoned on her ration books, it isn't so easy. But we still believe it's her inalienable right to hedge and prevaricate in order to keep her birth date dark. That's why we were so pleased at a conversation we overheard at a cocktail party.

A young man talking to an attractive older woman was speculating about the age of a well known actress. "She's probably as old as you are," he said; then, "How old *are* you?" he asked brashly. His companion leaned toward him. "Can you keep a secret?" she whispered. "Of course," he replied. "Well, so can I," she told him with a charming smile.

CHILDHOOD MEMENTO: If your godmother or some doting relative gave you a silver mug when you were a baby—you know, the kind with your name or To a Good Girl engraved on it—take it out of its Canton-flannel jacket, polish it, and use it as a container for cigarettes. If it bears your birth date and you want to exercise your inalienable right (see above), have a silversmith remove the revealing numerals.

SNUB FOR A FAMOUS MOTHER: James McNeill Whistler's widely known portrait of his mother, which has come to be so closely associated with Mother's Day, received short shrift from a snobbish Washington dowager, according to a story William Oliver Stevens tells in his new book, Washington: The Cinderella City. When the dowager's daughter brought home a fine reproduction of the painting from Europe, the old lady sniffed. "H'mph," she said. "What on earth did you buy that for? Don't you know she was only a McNeill of North Carolina?" Mr. Stevens' biography of the amazing city on the Potomac, by the way, makes lively reading for those who like their history spiced with gossip. It sparkles with stories of bygone belles and their scandals, revealing side lights on White House ladies, and bizarre little political and social dramas. (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, N. Y. Price $3.)

There's No bitterness in

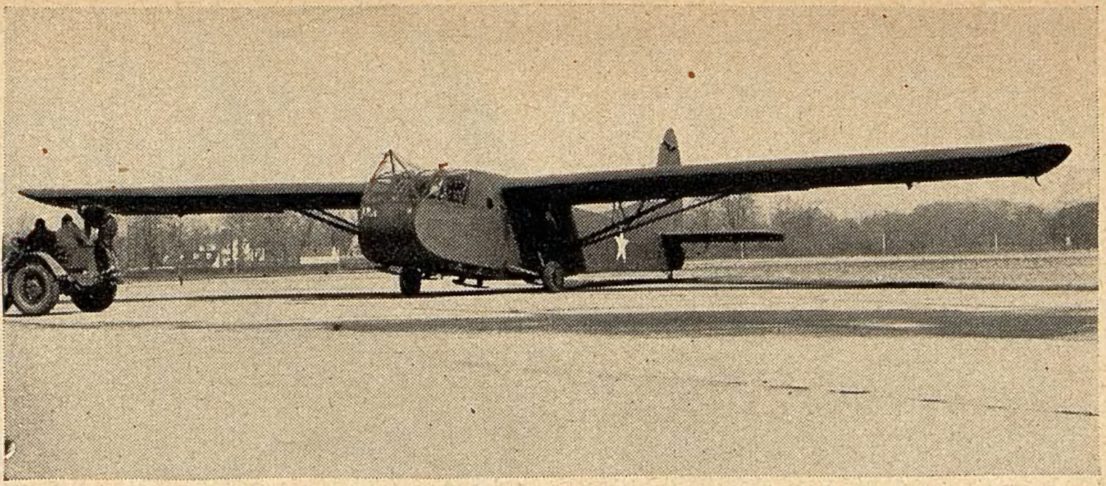
SCHLITZ
Schlitz
THE BEER THAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS

BREWED WITH
Just the KISS
of the hops

THE BEER THAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS

Copr. 1943, Jos. Schlitz Brewing Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

Glider being moved to the take-off point at the Ford Motor Company's airport in Dearborn, Michigan, whence it will be towed by an army plane to a glider depot.



ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Bombs for the East Coast? (Three attack methods)

If the Germans are determined to drop bombs on the United States, they have three methods open to them other than nonstop round-trip flights from Europe.

One is by using an aircraft carrier. Only one was available and nothing has been heard of it for a long time.

Another is the launching of single planes from the decks of submarines. This might be satisfactory (although hazardous) for performing a single mission, but certainly would be no more than a nuisance attack.

The third is the use of freighters equipped for catapulting flying boats from 500 to 1,000 miles offshore, and frankly, more than one U. S. official is surprised that the Germans did not attempt this method in 1942. Before the war Germany had four such freighters—the Westfalen, the Ostmark, the Schwabenland, and the Friedenland—and conducted extensive experiments in the North and South Atlantic with small mailplanes. These freighters can launch flying boats of loaded weights up to twenty-two and a half tons. Such flying boats could drop as much as seven tons of bombs on New York or other East Coast cities, depending on the round-trip distance from the freighter.

Or the freighters might act as floating bases for loading and refueling, with the flying boats starting their flights from Europe. So far as is known, the Germans haven't used catapulting, although such use may not have been discovered by us, or revealed officially.

Landplanes Join the Navy

For almost two decades top-flight U. S. airmen tried to convince their superiors that the answer to overwater air defense was not carrier-based airplanes or flying boats. The Army Air Corps developed the long-range four-engined Boeing Flying Fortress for overwater attack over the stiff opposition of the navy, which considered the oceans its exclusive territory to defend. But the navy which shunned landplanes (except for training) is now turning, significantly, to land-based airplanes developed originally for the army.

Bit by bit the navy has acknowledged what was generally known throughout the aviation industry and in Washington circles—that it has had on order, and is now using, landplanes. It marks a distinct revolution for the navy, although it will not, of course, give up carrier-based planes and flying boats. The first admission came in a communiqué describing the operation of its Consolidated Liberators (which are called PB4Ys) in the South Pacific. More recently it permitted the Vega Aircraft Corporation to announce construction of the navy version (PV-1) of the twin-engined Vega Ventura, being built in quantity for the Army Air Forces and the British. Three other former A. A. F. models are also being built for navy use for operations from navy land bases. Army veterans consider themselves vindicated by this turn of events. The answer is the land-based airplanes have a greater radius of operation, can carry much more fire power and bomb loads, have more speed and generally more utility in combat areas.

Air Superiority Near

With Allied air strength growing daily, what about Axis production and pilots? Little has ever been known of Japanese production, but there seems little doubt that the A. A. F. has steadily drained the Jap aerial supply and there is good reason to believe that the Nips cannot possibly keep pace with its heavy losses. Air superiority over the Japs is definitely in sight and our strategy of drawing the Japs out to the fringes has been a wise one.

As for Italy, there never was much to talk about, now that we have something to fight with ourselves. Italy's planes weren't so bad, but they weren't in the top rank either, and her pilots have never shown too much spunk, nor did she ever have large-scale plane production.

German plane production is believed to be seriously hampered—some of it irrevocably—by R. A. F. bombing raids, plus man-power and material problems as the result of long preparation and a long war. She still has a goodly number of airplanes, but she's on the way out as far as air power is concerned. Furthermore, she hasn't the advanced type of equipment necessary to combat new Allied types. What seemed to be a tremendous and invincible air strength in 1939 is now a back number. The outlook for air superiority over Germany is very bright; the Allies are probably nearer to it than they feel safe in saying.

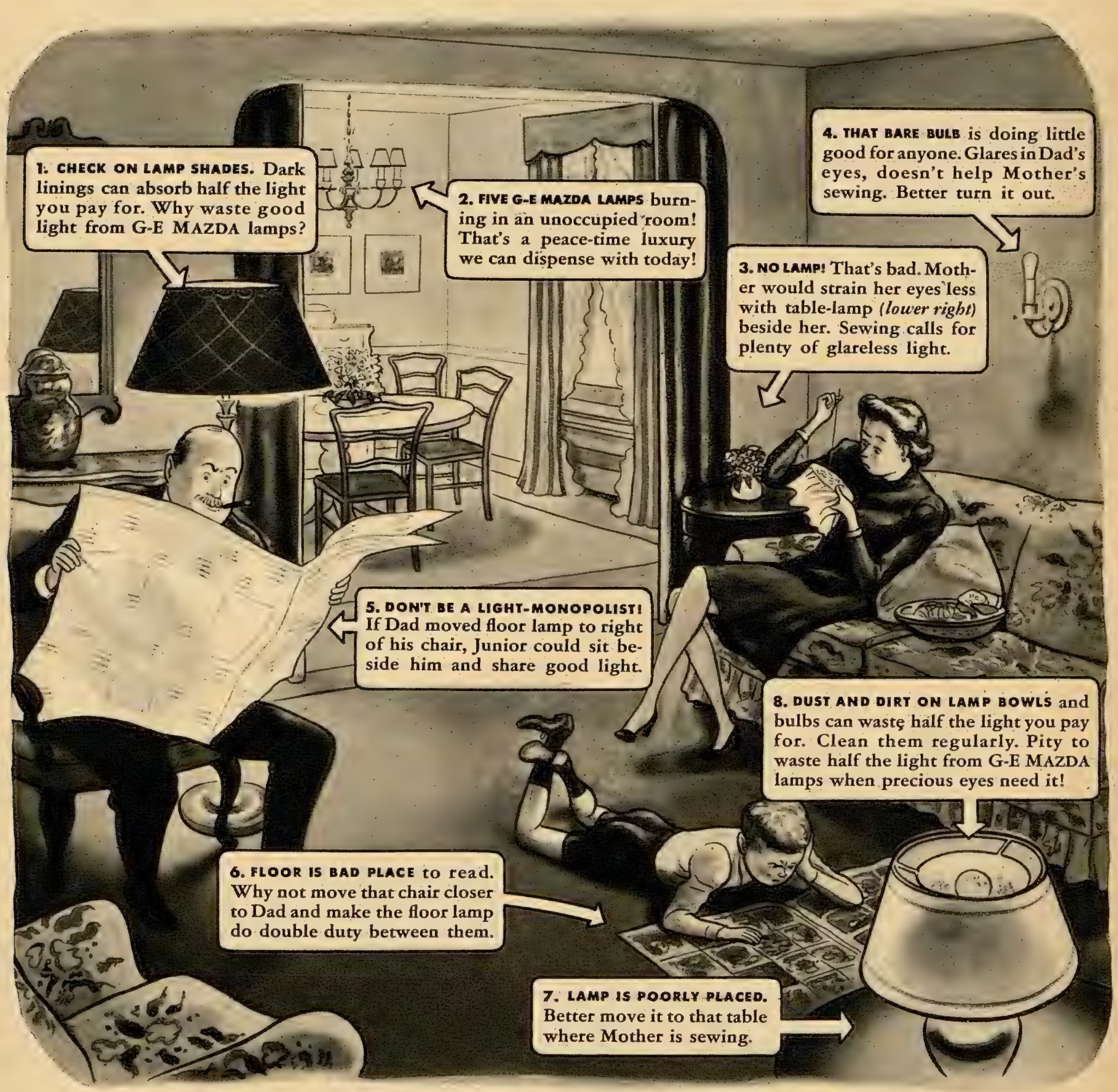
Build 'Em and Fly 'Em

One might think the employees of Brewster Aeronautical Corporation at Newark, New Jersey, saw enough of airplanes during working hours. But, like the postman who takes a long hike on his day off, several hundred Brewster workers, including women, have their own Penguin Flying Club and spend as much time as possible taking flying lessons and flying for the Civil Air Patrol.

A union-sponsored organization, now eighteen months old, the club has actually graduated twenty men who have received flying commissions in the army and navy and are serving on many war fronts. Recently the club purchased a ten-acre farm near Port Jervis, New York, and turned it into what is known as Huguenot Airport. Nonflying members keep busy studying meteorology, navigation, inspection, and blueprint reading. The club has a record of approximately 125,000 miles flown without accident and owns three airplanes—two Piper Cubs and a Fleet trainer.

How many of these lighting mistakes are you making?

TO HELP you protect eyes at home and conserve critical materials, General Electric asked its home lighting experts to list some of the common home lighting mistakes. If you follow these simple suggestions, you'll get more useful light from G-E MAZDA lamps—and help save both materials and electricity.



1. CHECK ON LAMP SHADES. Dark linings can absorb half the light you pay for. Why waste good light from G-E MAZDA lamps?

2. FIVE G-E MAZDA LAMPS burning in an unoccupied room! That's a peace-time luxury we can dispense with today!

3. NO LAMP! That's bad. Mother would strain her eyes less with table-lamp *(lower right)* beside her. Sewing calls for plenty of glareless light.

4. THAT BARE BULB is doing little good for anyone. Glares in Dad's eyes, doesn't help Mother's sewing. Better turn it out.

5. DON'T BE A LIGHT-MONOPOLIST! If Dad moved floor lamp to right of his chair, Junior could sit beside him and share good light.

6. FLOOR IS BAD PLACE to read. Why not move that chair closer to Dad and make the floor lamp do double duty between them.

7. LAMP IS POORLY PLACED. Better move it to that table where Mother is sewing.

8. DUST AND DIRT ON LAMP BOWLS and bulbs can waste half the light you pay for. Clean them regularly. Pity to waste half the light from G-E MAZDA lamps when precious eyes need it!

G-E MAZDA LAMPS
G-E MAZDA LAMPS
GENERAL ELECTRIC
GENERAL ELECTRIC

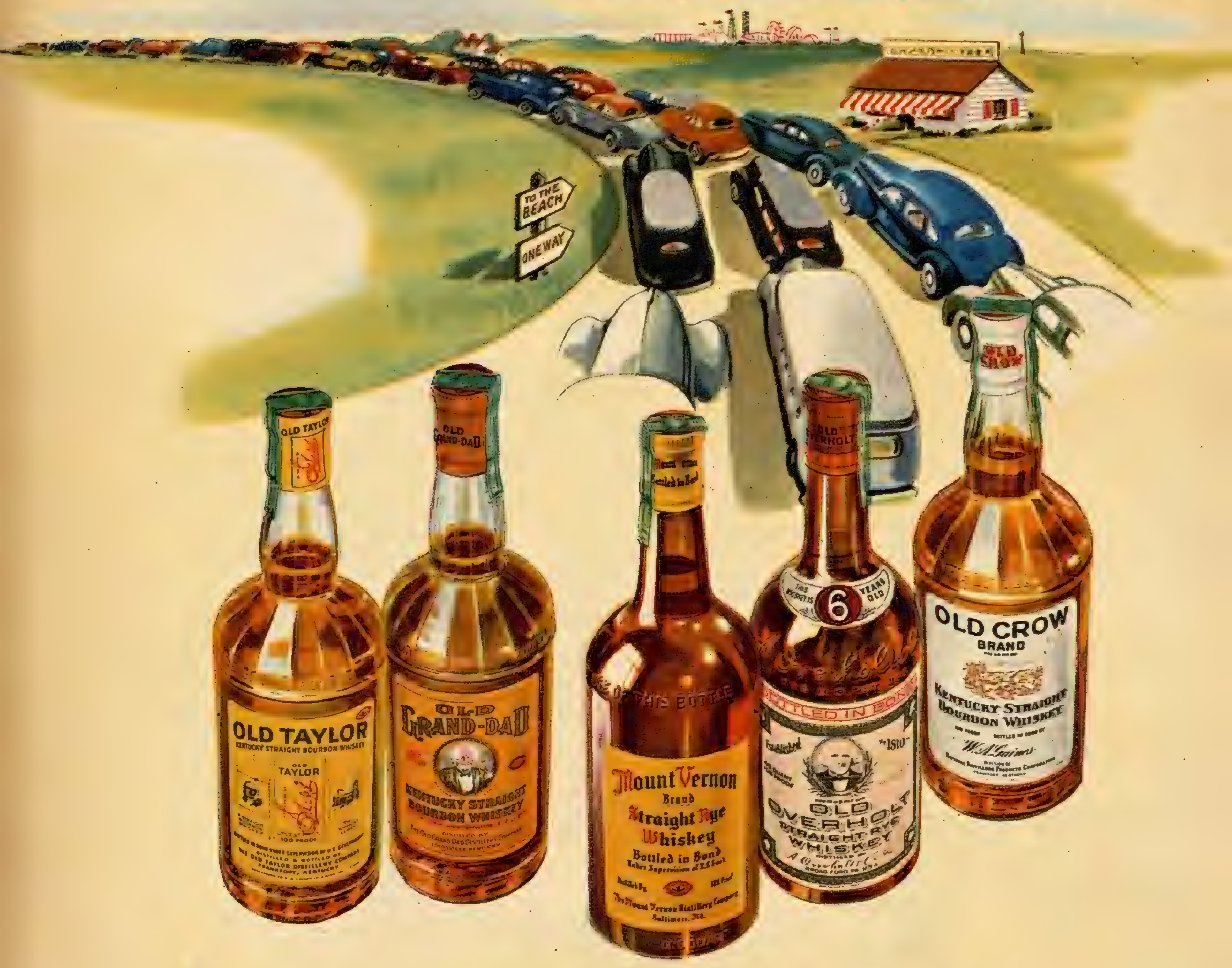
9. GOOD EYESIGHT is one of our most valuable national resources. So don't strain your eyes. Have them examined regularly. And remember, G-E research has worked for over half a century to give you the abundant light of modern G-E MAZDA lamps. Don't throw away the benefits of all those years of lighting research. *Don't waste light!*

G-E MAZDA LAMPS

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Long Before Pearl Harbor

they were aging in oak


TO THE BEACH
ONE WAY
OLD TAYLOR
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY
OLD GRAND-DAD
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY
Mount Vernon
Brand
Straight Rye Whiskey
Bottled in Bond
THIS WHISKEY IS 6 YEARS OLD
BOTTLED IN BOND
OLD OVERHOLT
STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY
OLD CROW
BRAND
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

YEARS before there were any gasoline ration books, these great whiskies were laid away to age under the most favorable auspices imaginable. Fifty years ago, you see, the Congress of the United States passed a very fortunate law for the man who really likes fine whiskies. This Bottled-in-Bond Act specifies strict regulations governing bottled in bond whiskies.

As a result, none of the emergency changes forced upon most other products by war-time needs have touched these great whiskies. So whenever you buy *these* bottled in bond products you obtain identically the same quality. It is no special privilege or favor but simply a matter of long-standing law.

At a time when National Distillers is not making a drop of whiskey and when every distillery the Company owns has been completely turned over to the production of alcohol for war purposes, it is pleasant to know that without being selfish, wasteful or unpatriotic, you can find in any one of these five great brands of whiskey the same unchanged and unchanging quality that you used to like 5, 10 or even 50 years ago. *Every drop of it was laid away long before Pearl Harbor.*

OLD GRAND-DAD
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

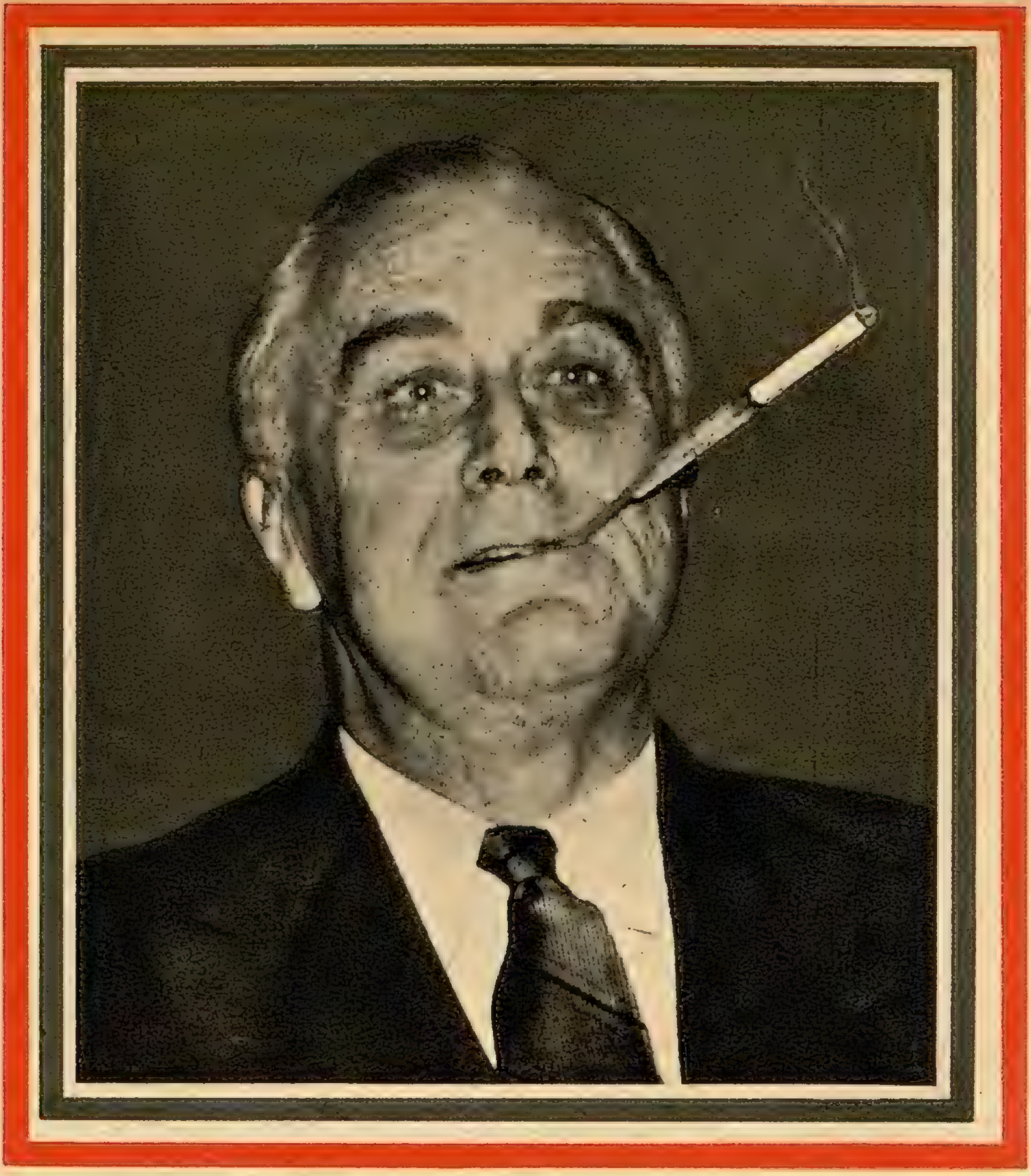
OLD TAYLOR
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

OLD CROW
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT WHISKEY—RYE OR BOURBON

MOUNT VERNON
BRAND
STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY

OLD OVERHOLT
STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY

THESE WHISKIES ARE 4 YEARS OLD, 100 PROOF, BOTTLED IN BOND, NATIONAL DISTILLERS PRODUCTS CORP., N. Y.



Liberty
THE MAGAZINE
OF A
FREE PEOPLE

Vill Roosevelt run gain? Can he win f he does? Who vill oppose him? Vashington's best in- ormed reporter sizes p the situation

PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITIES FOR '44

BY RAYMOND CLAPPER

IN politics, the big question is whether President Roosevelt will run for a fourth term. He is, without question, the dominant political figure, yet few would assume that he could be easily re-elected.

The uncertainties of politics are increased by the uncertainties of war. In wartime, people vote with far more explosive emotion than in peacetime. We saw how in the election last November even the most astute Republicans failed to realize how large a vote Republicans were to receive everywhere, a vote thrust upon them by a disgruntled electorate.

War is not only deep personal loss. It is also a mass of trivial irritations. The small irritations of today are the big anti-administration votes of tomorrow. Quick and easy victory in the last war did not save Woodrow Wilson and his administration from quick and overwhelming defeat immediately thereafter.

A President may win the war but may at the same time suffer retribution for the small inconveniences that were inevitable in the process of winning it. People may not turn against a President because he sent their sons to war. They are, however, liable to dislike him because they have had to restrict their automobile driving, fill out complicated forms, submit to food rationing, and undergo other irritating inconveniences. These are the little things that add up to furious popular indignation against an administration.

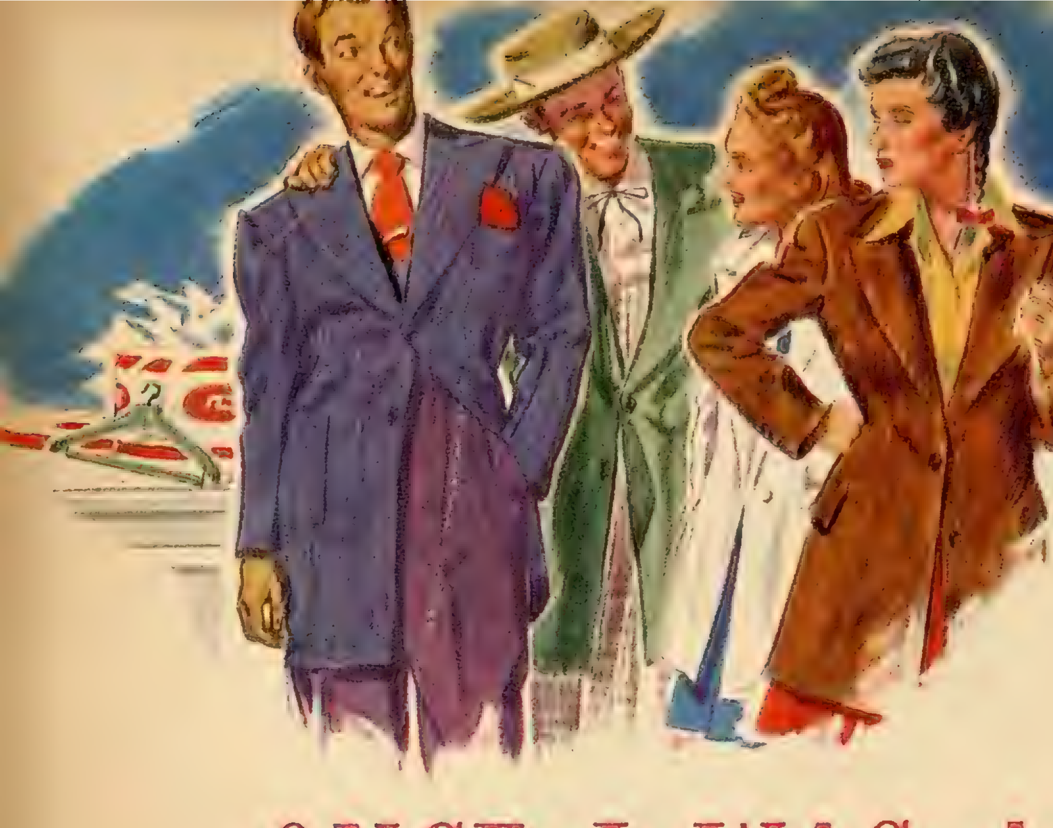
The political factions working against re-election of Mr. Roosevelt know that—and are counting upon it to help them when the time arrives.

Inside the Democratic Party, anti-New Deal Democrats are trying to capture the party. This is mainly the dream of Southern conservatives. They have willing allies in some Northern Democrats, led by Senator Wheeler, who are against Mr. Roosevelt because of past differences over either domestic or foreign policies. James A. Farley, deeply embittered, is spending a great deal of time working among local Democratic political leaders all around the country.

If there is any chance of the Democratic Party being captured by these anti-Roosevelt forces, it lies in the political ability of Big Jim Farley. He took control of the New York State Democratic convention away from Mr. Roosevelt last fall. He nominated his own man, John J. Bennett, Jr., for governor against the President's open choice, Senator James M. Mead. Only in 1940, when Mr. Farley tried unsuccessfully to prevent the nomination of President Roosevelt for a third term, did his magic fail.

But he has won a new lease on life, as have all conservatives, from the last elections, and he is now drawing on his long experience and talents, and on his vast friendships among Democratic Party workers, to prevent the renomination of the President or the nomination of a

(*Continued on page 42*)



ONCE I WAS A HEP CAT

Here's the wackiest jive contest on record, with the winner taking all zoot suits and every one enjoying a good fight

BY JOEL REEVE

ILLUSTRATED BY AL SCHMIDT

WHEN writing about the Mulraneys, it is necessary to use many capital letters. Like, Mother was a Famous Model. Father is a Noted Artist. The Five Fabulous Brothers are simultaneously Lieutenants (j. g.) in the United States Navy.

The sixth brother is not generally mentioned. They do not exactly hide me in closets, but I have a corner. In the presence of all those Magnificent Mulraneys, those handsome champions of everything, it is better that I retire to my corner and remain quiescent.

My brothers are named Picasso, Matisse, El Greco, Gauguin, and Cézanne. That gives you the idea. You need only know that the last of the lads—which is this writer—was christened Thomas Hart Benton Mulraney. Mother is a large lovely extrovert, almost as tall as father, and I love her dearly, but living up to her is another thing.

Father can whip his weight in offspring, which is no mean feat, and in the last year has proved it over each of us. That was how I lost my front teeth. The navy did not like me without my front teeth, but would probably have accepted me anyway were it not for the scar tissue.

I have scar tissue all over my slight frame. It came from striving with the Five Fabulous Brothers and their sire. Picasso broke my arm showing me a wrestling trick. Matisse and I were tumbling in the gym when my ribs were fractured. With El Greco I fell off a diving board the wrong way and tore my left deltoid. Gauguin dropped a bar bell on my toe, causing a fracture.

Of course they are all nice boys, full of spirit and muscles, and mother and father are justly famous. I never hated my family. I merely rebelled.

Probably I would have sat in my corner indefinitely, taking solace in my own accomplishments, had it not been for the navy. I was accustomed to buffets from my family. But when the navy told me that I could not even aspire to be an ensign, something cracked within me.

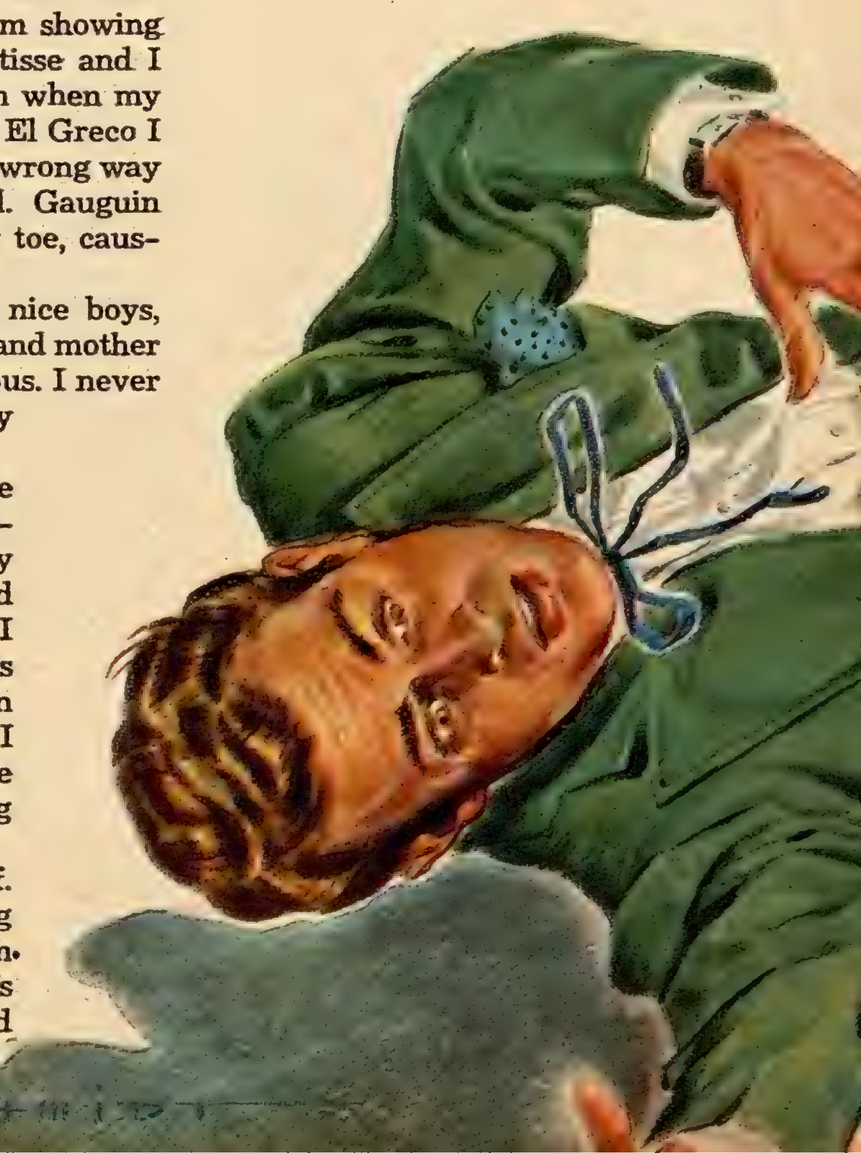
I had to assert myself. My libido was strangling me. I had to get away from the suffocating Mulraneys and do something weird—anything—to be on my own!

I had been reading this piece in Tittle-Tattle. It was profusely illustrated and contained careful particulars. It was titled, What Makes with the Zoot Suit? I could not imagine anything more revolting. I seized upon it, devoured it once more. I hatched my scheme even as the Five Fabulous Brothers came home on leave to make a field day for the photographers of magazine and daily press and fine publicity for the Navy Department which I loathed.

My allowance check would be ample. I escaped from the house on Eighty-ninth Street where all was so gay, and fled to a clothing store on Eighth Avenue which I had previously patronized. It was Saturday and it was late evening, but Willy Caspar was still there. Willy's father owned the place, and Willy worked there. I was fond of Willy.

I burst into the store and stopped dead, staring. Willy was posing before a mirror. He was trying on a hat with a tiny crown and a tremendous pie-plate brim. He wore plaid trousers which spanned his chest, waist, and narrow hips, then flared downward with abundance to where a five-inch cuff, complete with zipper, embraced his ankles. His green jacket was padded in the shoulders to the width of a truck tailgate and extended in a drape below his knees.

He wore knobby-toed shoes, bright yellow. A string tie was negligently tied about his neck. A chain dangled from the watch pocket under his chin to his calves. He was a riot.



I said, "Willy! That's what I want! A zoot suit!"

He frowned. He said, "There are no more zoot suits. Reat pleats are out for the duration. Ruff cuffs are banned. We are a dying race!"

I said, "Don't be an ick, Dick. I got lots of line on the mouse and I'm out to latch onto a wren and lay my racket. You know any home-cookin' what can boogie-woogie?"

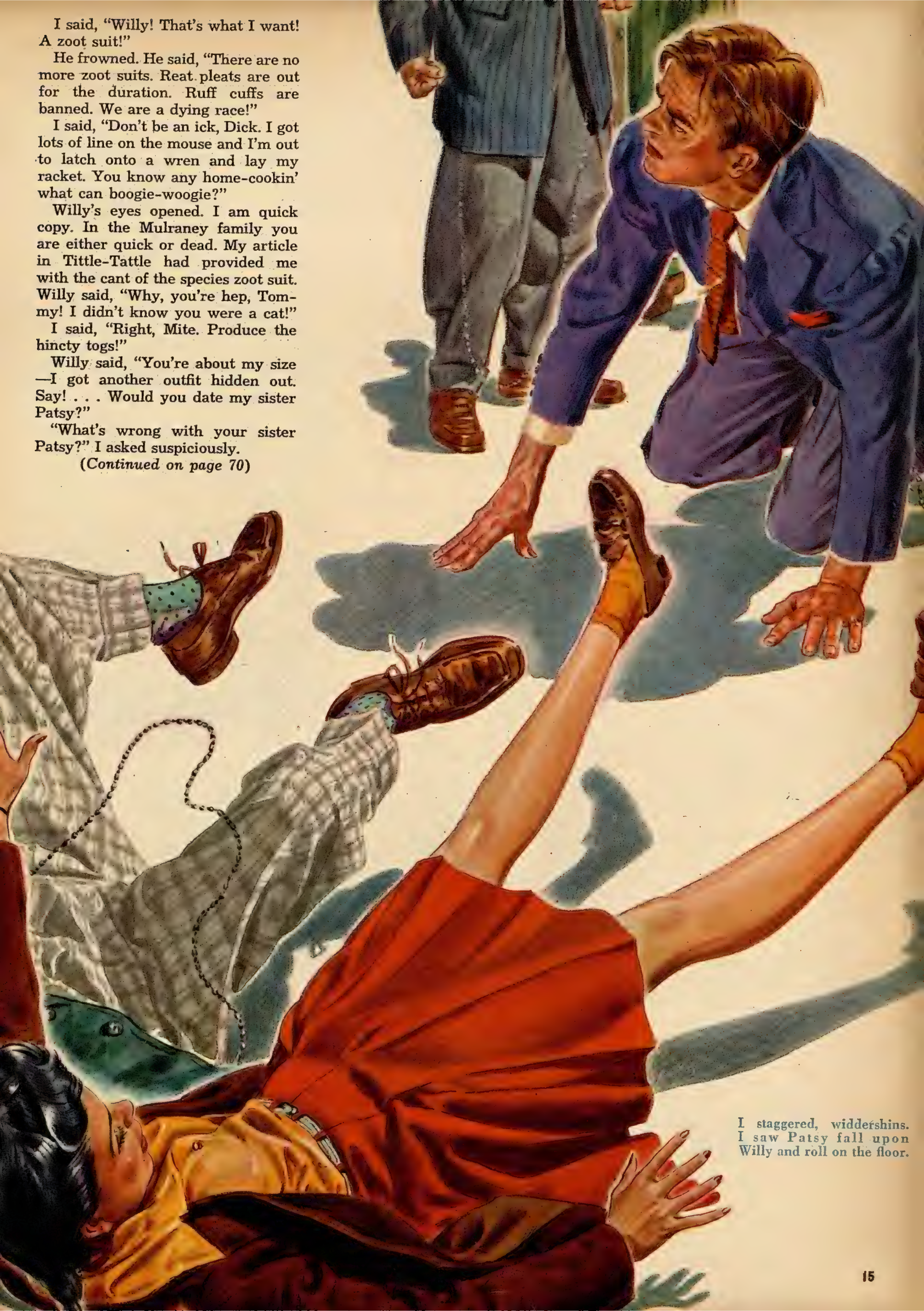
Willy's eyes opened. I am quick copy. In the Mulraney family you are either quick or dead. My article in Tittle-Tattle had provided me with the cant of the species zoot suit. Willy said, "Why, you're hep, Tommy! I didn't know you were a cat!"

I said, "Right, Mite. Produce the hincty togs!"

Willy said, "You're about my size —I got another outfit hidden out. Say! . . . Would you date my sister Patsy?"

"What's wrong with your sister Patsy?" I asked suspiciously.

(*Continued on page 70*)

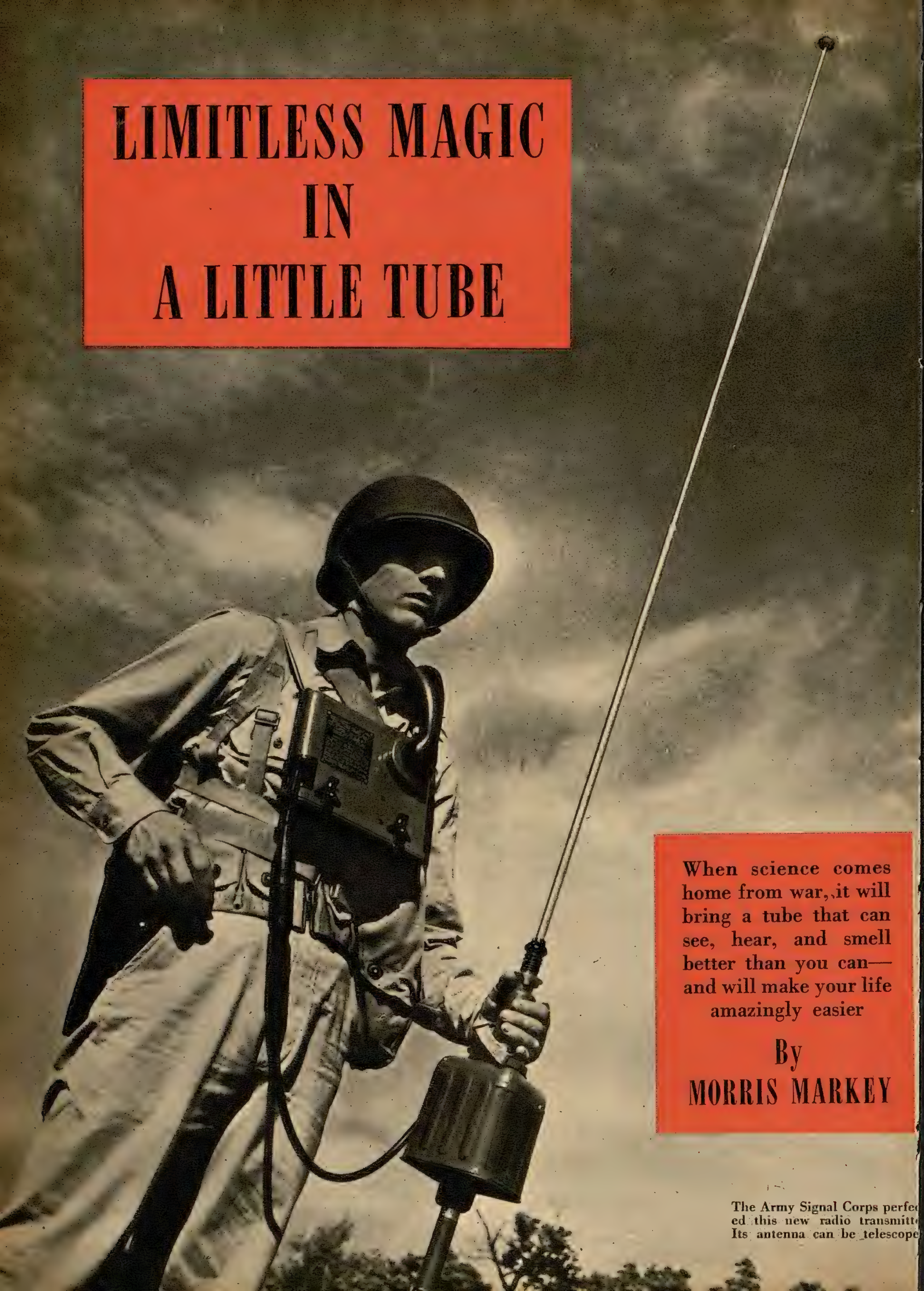


I staggered, widdershins. I saw Patsy fall upon Willy and roll on the floor.

LIMITLESS MAGIC IN A LITTLE TUBE

When science comes home from war, it will bring a tube that can see, hear, and smell better than you can—and will make your life amazingly easier

By
MORRIS MARKEY



The Army Signal Corps perfec
ed this new radio transmitt
Its antenna can be telescope

POSTWAR LIVING-1

"HELLO—that you, Joe?"

"Sure. What's on your mind, Mary?"

"Where are you?"

"Out clearing up those stumps. What's the matter?"

"The man from town is here with those new parts for the air conditioner. Guess you'd better come on in and check them over."

Whereupon Joe puts his "handie-talkie" back in its pouch, gives orders to the hired man, and heads for the house a few miles away.

That kind of casual wireless conversation between individuals is one of the simplest of the marvels which will be at our command when the last gun is fired and the engineers and factories of America translate the things *they have already learned* to the uses of a new, peaceful civilization.

As that day comes closer, there is a word you will hear more and more often. *Electronics* will play an almost incalculable part in your future life. And what, you may ask, is electronics?

Well, your radio tubes are electronic tubes. But the usefulness of this tube is by no means limited to wireless communication. Before it was invented, scientists did not at all understand what electricity was, although they produced it with a variety of machines and "piped" it along wires and contrived ways to make it work. The electronic tube removed the mystery. It showed, plain as day, what electricity really is.

Everything in nature—you and your dog, an oak tree and the water of a river—is composed of tiny particles called atoms. Each atom consists of a core around which even tinier particles whirl at dizzy speed. The whirling bits are called electrons.

Electronic tubes make it possible to draw the electrons away from their cores—to get hold of electricity itself in the pure form, so to speak—and to use it, under precise control. The scientists began to say, "Now, at last, we've really got our hands down into electricity. Tell us what you want done with it. We'll do it."

And even in this early stage they proved that the electronic tube can do these things:

It can see better than you can. It can see for hundreds of miles through pitch-black darkness, and it can see through solid steel.

It can hear better than you can. Its sense of touch is far better than yours, and its "physical reactions" a million times quicker. It can smell things which you could not smell at all. And it can taste, though not very well just yet. It can activate metal fingers which move more swiftly and accurately than those of any human who ever lived.

Naturally, at present most of the genius of the electronic tube is being applied to the uses of war. At Casablanca, U. S. naval guns destroyed the French battleship Jean Bart with only two salvos, both direct hits. The Jean Bart was twenty-six miles away, far out of human sight. In all the firing at Casablanca every shell hit a military target. Not one landed in the town or injured a civilian. Electronic tubes, working in planes over the target, were guiding the gun sights, and also were reporting the results instantaneously.

At Pearl Harbor electronic devices detected the Jap planes when they were still 132 miles away—but human frailty neglected to heed the warning.

Such military uses of our discovery are not likely to interest us much when peace returns. But we all will fly in the future. And the pilots of the ships we ride will be able, because of wartime developments, to forget the hazards of weather. They will be able to fly (as military planes fly now) thousands of feet above the earth, through snow and murk and fog. Before them, on a ground-glass plate, electronic tubes will be drawing a map of the earth below and a map of what lies ahead, whether mountains or tall buildings, open fields or smooth waters. Ships, too, will be equipped with the device which can see through fog or darkness and warn of shoaling waters or oncoming vessels.

The compact two-way radio, also, is largely the child of wartime aviation's necessity. Each plane must have one. The radios are now coming off production lines—so sturdy that a design test is to drop them on concrete from a height of five feet.

Some of these sets operate on ultra-short waves. This provides such a wealth of channels that the air can never become as crowded as it does on the commercial broadcast band.

Similar two-way radios are already being used in big construction projects with scattered units, in lumbering and mining operations, in the operation of big truck fleets, and in large-scale farming operations. All of us know that the police use them. And they are becoming standard equipment for forest rangers, and for use in flood, hurricane, and earthquake disasters.

The manufacture of sets for ordinary home reception of general broadcasts has been frozen for the duration. But research and improvement go on. Radio engineers are sure that the future will see a general swing toward broadcasting (and receiving) through frequency modulation, the FM which practically elimi-

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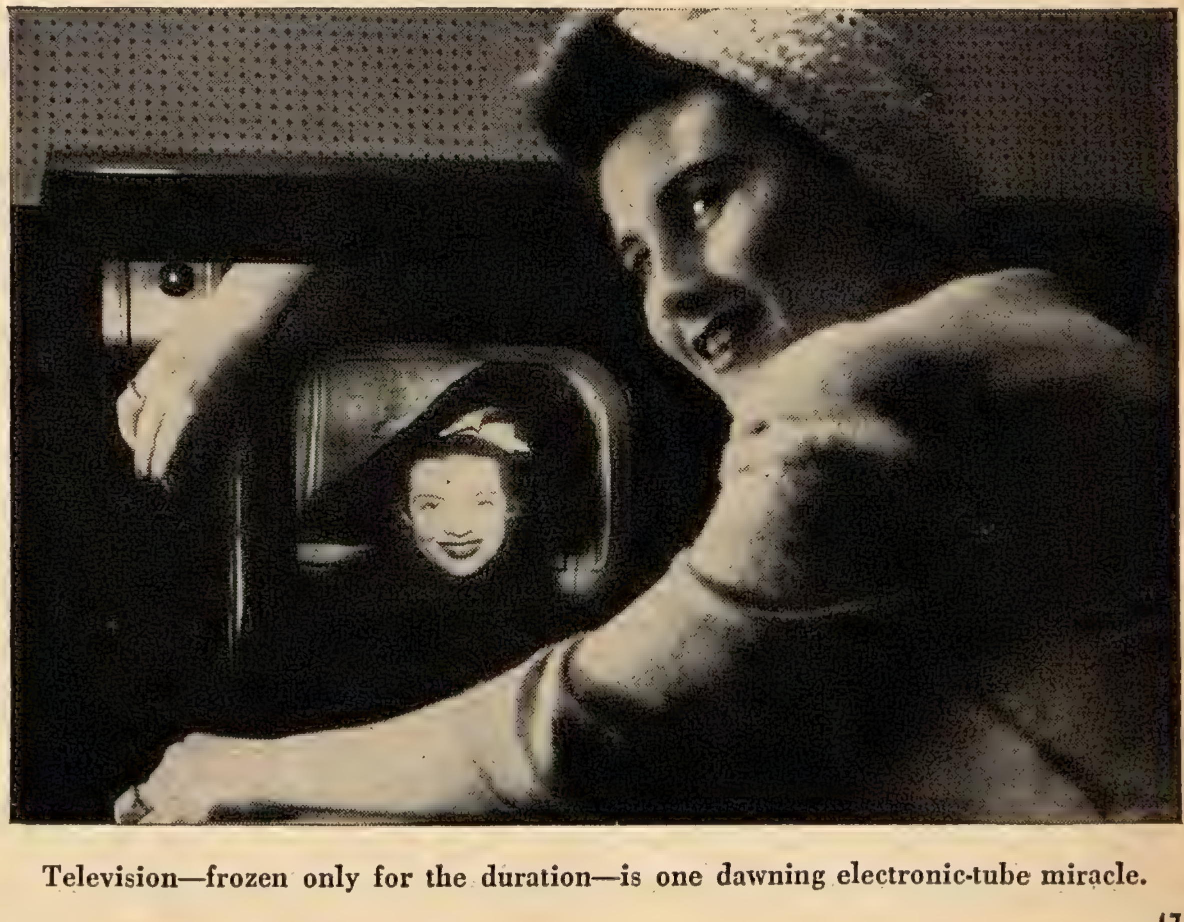
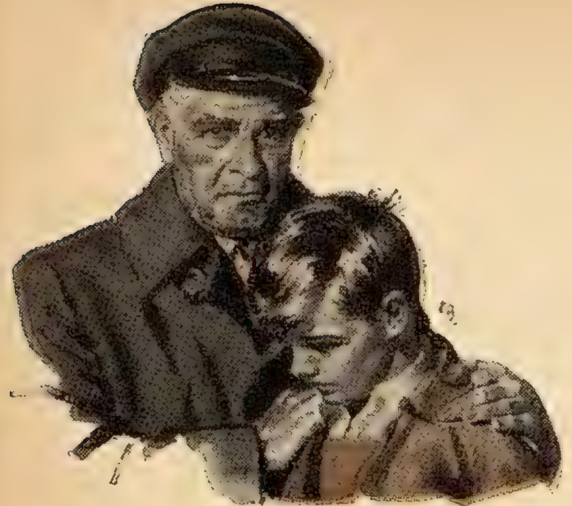


Television—frozen only for the duration—is one dawning electronic-tube miracle.



LANTERN ON THE BEACH

They all thought little Eddie's scheme was childish—but he avenged his brother's death

BY NOEL HOUSTON

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK BENSING

HIGH on the ridge of the Seven Sisters dunes Eddie Daniel glumly watched a tanker ply north three miles off the Carolina shore. Eddie didn't think much of the war. They said there was something everybody could do to help win it, but that just wasn't so. There wasn't anything a twelve-year-old boy could do.

His father tended the drawbridge over to Roanoke Island. That was important. His sister worked in a munitions factory up in Virginia; and his brother Harvey had been shipping on tankers since 1940. Even his mother helped at the Red Cross.

But for him and his pony, Tuney, there wasn't nothing. Why hadn't he been born a little sooner? Then he could be in the marines! Sure was terrible—being twelve and useless.

Eddie kicked angrily at the sand.

Just then a pillar of smoke climbed into the sky above the tanker and spread out like a black mushroom. The boom of an explosion rolled in from the sea.

Eddie's mouth dropped open. This wasn't the first torpedoing off the Outer Banks. There had been three ships sunk between Buxton and Hatteras the past two days. But this was the first Eddie had actually seen.

Down to his left, at the Nags Head Coast Guard Station, the guardsmen were hastily trundling out the boats. People were running out of stores and houses and converging on the beach.

Eddie ran and slid down the dune to the flat where Tuney was munching grass. He mounted the pony's bare back and galloped across the black-top highway to the shore. The three Nags Head boats had become white specks this side the column of smoke, which was spreading out as the oil on the ocean caught fire.

Five planes roared over from their inland base. They dropped patterns of depth charges beyond the smoke area. Eddie was so excited he could hardly breathe. If only he were old enough to be out there helping!

The first two rescue boats returned, rocking and charging through the surf. Eddie saw they held only the coast guard crews. But in the stern of the third boat lay three blackened figures. Two boatmen were holding them against bumping overboard.

When the boat was beached, a group of menfolk gathered around the guardsmen, lifting out the bodies. Standing at a distance above the tidemark were a dozen womenfolk. One of the women was Eddie's mother. When she saw him down at the water's edge, she shouted, "Eddie, you come up here with me."

Eddie didn't hear her. He couldn't hear anything. There was a roaring in his ears like a hundred nor'easters were churning the surf. For when George Bass of the third boat waded in, he reported to old Captain Knight: "Three men, sir, was all we could find. Two of them are burned to death and the third one dying. He's Harvey Daniel, by thunder."

And Eddie standing there heard him, and he looked, and it was his brother Harvey. His brother's face was black and drawn in torture and his body was oil-smeared and burnt; but Eddie could tell. He could tell.

They laid Harvey Daniel on his back, and Doc Anthony, who brought Harvey into this world, worked over him. But you could see doc didn't have any hope.

Eddie dropped to his knees beside his brother, still holding Tuney's reins. The tears rolled down his freckled face onto the sand. He tried to keep from crying out loud. A sob broke from his throat in spite of himself.

At that Harvey opened his eyes. He didn't seem to see clearly, but he forced a whisper. "Hello, Eddie."

Eddie couldn't answer. He just clenched his fists together and shook his head.

"I was standing . . . by the rail," Harvey whispered. "Lookin' towards our house. And I was thinkin' . . . if I could yell loud enough . . . I could holler hello . . . let you know . . . I was passin' by."

Eddie nodded. "Sure," he said. "Sure. I seen you. I was up on the dune."

Harvey Daniel's mouth worked hard. He made a croaking sound come out. "Right in our own front

yard, Eddie. Right out there . . . where we used . . . to fish for blues." And his eyes were lit with bitter anger.

"You gonna be all right, Harvey?" said Eddie. "You gonna be?"

"Sure, kid." He looked past Eddie. "Got old Tuney with you. A good . . ."

And suddenly Harvey Daniel didn't say any more. His eyes stared blank at the sunny sky.

A pair of rough, strong hands lifted Eddie to his feet. Next thing he knew, he was walking down the beach with some one's arm around him. He looked up. Through misty eyes he saw it was his friend Old Man Si Denning.

"We'll just go down to my shack, Eddie, and set a bit," Old Man Si said.

Behind him Eddie heard a woman scream. It was his mother. They had told her. A shudder passed through Eddie's slight frame.

The old man and the boy cut away from the shore line, their feet crunching the broken shells, and Tuney plodded along behind. They came to Old Man Si's one-room shack, set amid the tufts of salt grass.

Inside it was cool and dark and smelled of fish. Eddie sat on the single bed, which was never made up. Old Man Si put a pot of coffee on the kerosene stove. He sat at the table and pushed back the dirty dishes. He scratched his stubbly chin and looked at Eddie. Then he ran a hand through his stiff gray hair. Eddie just stared straight in front of himself.

Old Man Si coughed. "Now, if you was older, Eddie, I could give you a shot of corn likker and that would help. But we'll have some coffee anyway, and outside of that you'll have to be a man all by yerself."

"I'm all right, Mr. Denning," said Eddie.

"Sure ya are."

Old Man Si rubbed the stump of his left forefinger. It was cut off at the first joint. He wished he hadn't ever told Eddie how he had lost that finger, so he could tell him now.

But of course he had told that to Eddie and to everybody else he had ever met. How he was one of the natives Orville and Wilbur Wright got to run alongside the airplane to steady it that day it took off, up the way at Kitty Hawk. How his finger got caught between two wires at the end of the wing and was nearly yanked off when the craft rose in the air. "The world's first airyplane accident," Old Man Si proudly told strangers.

When he judged fishing conditions were right, Old Man Si staked a long net to the shore and ran it out, then took his haul to Manteo. Generally, though, he didn't judge conditions to be right. Then he and Eddie would sit around, and he would tell Eddie tales of old times on the Banks.

He wished he could think of a story to tell Eddie now, something to buck him up. But though he racked his brain it seemed as if he had told Eddie, at one time or an-

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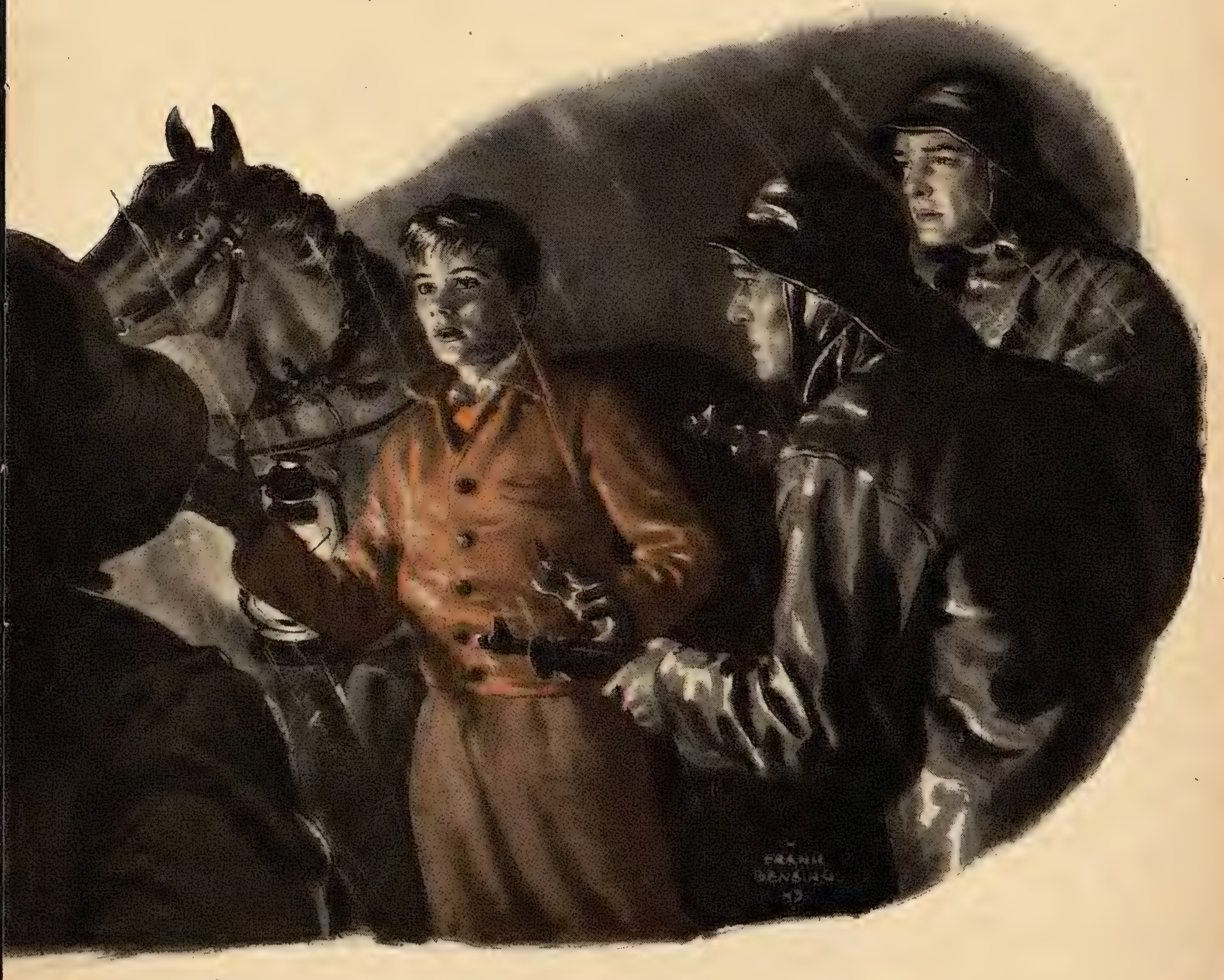


Figures leaped out of the darkness, and Eddie looked into the barrels of rifles.

To our war birds in Britain a Flying Fortress is more than so many tons of flying metal. Eavesdrop on a bull session about one

Somewhere in England four Yank sergeants, fellow flyers of a B-17, study a map.

“DINAH MITE”—A

Editor's Note: The following article was written by a member of the 8th Air Force somewhere in England.

IT was once an R. A. F. bomber station “somewhere in England,” and traces of R. A. F. occupancy still remain—in the blue uniforms of liaison officers trudging through the mud, in the shove halfpenny boards in the game room, in the prim little garden where English daisies bloom, and in faded notes left on the bulletin board—“Will Pilot Officer Joyce ring his home directly?”

But for several months now the station has been taken over by a United States Army Air Forces bomber group. What you see and hear today are American faces and American voices. On the yellow wall of the messroom—a long, low-ceilinged room filled with bare plank tables and benches—is painted a list of dates and names that tell tales of American exploits. The first date is August 17, 1942, and opposite it are the words “Rouen, France” and a single swastika, signifying a Messerschmitt 109 which when last seen was a tongue of flame licking downward over occupied France. A lengthy list of other dates and names—Rotterdam, Amiens, St. Omer, Lille—follows, and beside them are many swastikas.

This is the bomber group's informal scoreboard. This is what they look at while they eat, and dream of while they sleep—the places they have raided and the enemy planes they have destroyed. As a representative bomber group operating in our European theater, this one has known good days and bad. It has lost ships and it has lost men. But most of its ships and its men have gone out and done the job they were trained to do—daylight precision bombing from the Flying Fortresses, the B-17s—and have returned to their station to wait for the next assignment.

This is about a ship that didn't return—the story of a B-17 named Dinah Mite and the ten men who mourn its loss with a personal and sincere grief.

The Dinah Mite is gone. Seven times Lieutenant James N. Sammons and his crew took it out on raiding operations and brought it back unscathed. Then came the morning when Sammons' crew was on pass—that is, on leave—and the ship was sent on a raid manned by a different crew. Two of Sammons' mates, the co-pilot and the navigator, hadn't taken advantage of their leave permission, for they had had a hunch that the ship might be sent out and they wanted to be with her. And they were with her. They were with her when a German Focke-Wulf 190 hit two of her engines after she had dropped her bomb load on the target and was on her way back to England. Other returning crews saw her heading toward the earth—apparently still under control—for a forced landing in occupied France.

That was the end of the Dinah Mite. But the seven swastikas painted on her side—representing seven planes “confirmed destroyed”—proved her worth.

Here is a list of the “Dinah Mite's original crew, two of whom—Captain Gray and Lieutenant Tingle—went to the ground with her. Note their ages and the towns from which they came. Youthful Americans from the cities and crossroads of eight scattered states—typical of the men who are fighting our war in the air in the European theater:

Pilot, Lieutenant James N. Sammons, 28, Clifford, Kentucky
Co-pilot, Lieutenant William L. Tingle, 24, San Antonio, Texas
Bombardier, Lieutenant Edward M. Branch, 24, San Antonio, Texas
Navigator, Captain Joseph H. Gray, 24, Tallahassee, Florida
Top Turret Gunner, Tech. Sergeant Pruitte L. Clements, 21, Pawhuska, Oklahoma
Radio Operator, Staff Sergeant Eugene H. Evans, 19, Opelousas, Louisiana
Ball Turret Gunner, Staff Sergeant John Sullivan, 24, St. Cloud, Minnesota
Waist Gunner, Sergeant Morris C. Besly, 20, Pawnee, Oklahoma
Waist Gunner, Sergeant William Shuey, 22, Hummelstown, Pennsylvania
Tail Gunner, Sergeant Howard Wilbur, 26, Catskill, New York

Most of them look like boys. With the exception of Lieutenant Sammons, not one of them resembles the six-foot, even-profiled heartbreakers who used to stroll in from the pilot's cabin on planes flown by U. S. commercial air lines. Some are chunky, some are even chubby, with round faces which as yet appear not to have molded into final form. Others could be termed “gawky”—the sort you can expect will “fill out when he gets his growth.”

But when you fly with them you have no fear that they are immature. You know they are experienced and capable in their jobs, and you have confidence in them—just as they have confidence in each other.

Lieutenant Sammons, who captains the crew, has been with most of these men since they took their

At zero hour, American ground crews line up on their bikes to wave good luck to the bomber's crew as it takes off.

NFORGETTABLE B-17

operational training work together at Sarasota, Florida. Small-featured, blond, with blue eyes from which radiate a tiny network of wrinkles, Sammons—or "Sammy," as he is called—is a drawling, slow-spoken Kentuckian who planned to be a teacher. The only place he sits erect is in his pilot's seat. Elsewhere he is likely to lounge or sprawl, with one long leg crossed over the other, while he talks about "that little old ship." He gestures with one hand as he talks. All these crewmen gesture with their hands when they talk about planes—and they talk about planes most of the time. "She came in like this," they'll say, their open palms weaving and then swooping upward, "and all of a sudden she turned in and . . ."

The particular raid Lieutenant Sammons described was the last from which the Dinah Mite made a successful return—it was over Lille, on October 10, 1942. But he spoke, too, of the six raids which had preceded it, especially his first, on Rouen. That was also the first raid for the other squadrons in the group.

"When I was a little kid," he said, "I had a cousin, and I used to hear him tell about the last war and how, when a bunch of men were asked to volunteer for overseas duty, the whole damn line stepped forward like one person. I used to think that sure was fine, but I thought that if it was me I'd have been scared. And when we went out to Rouen that first time I expected to be scared plenty.

"Well, sir, it was a funny thing. When we got over the Channel and sighted the French coast, I kept thinking, Well, here it starts. But nothing happened—just a little flak that never even touched us. Then, as we got to the target and went into the bombing run, I thought, All right. *This* is where it starts. But it didn't start there either, because we just dropped our load and turned around and headed back without being bothered by a single fighter. A lot of other ships were, but ours wasn't. Not on that first trip, anyway. So I never have been scared."

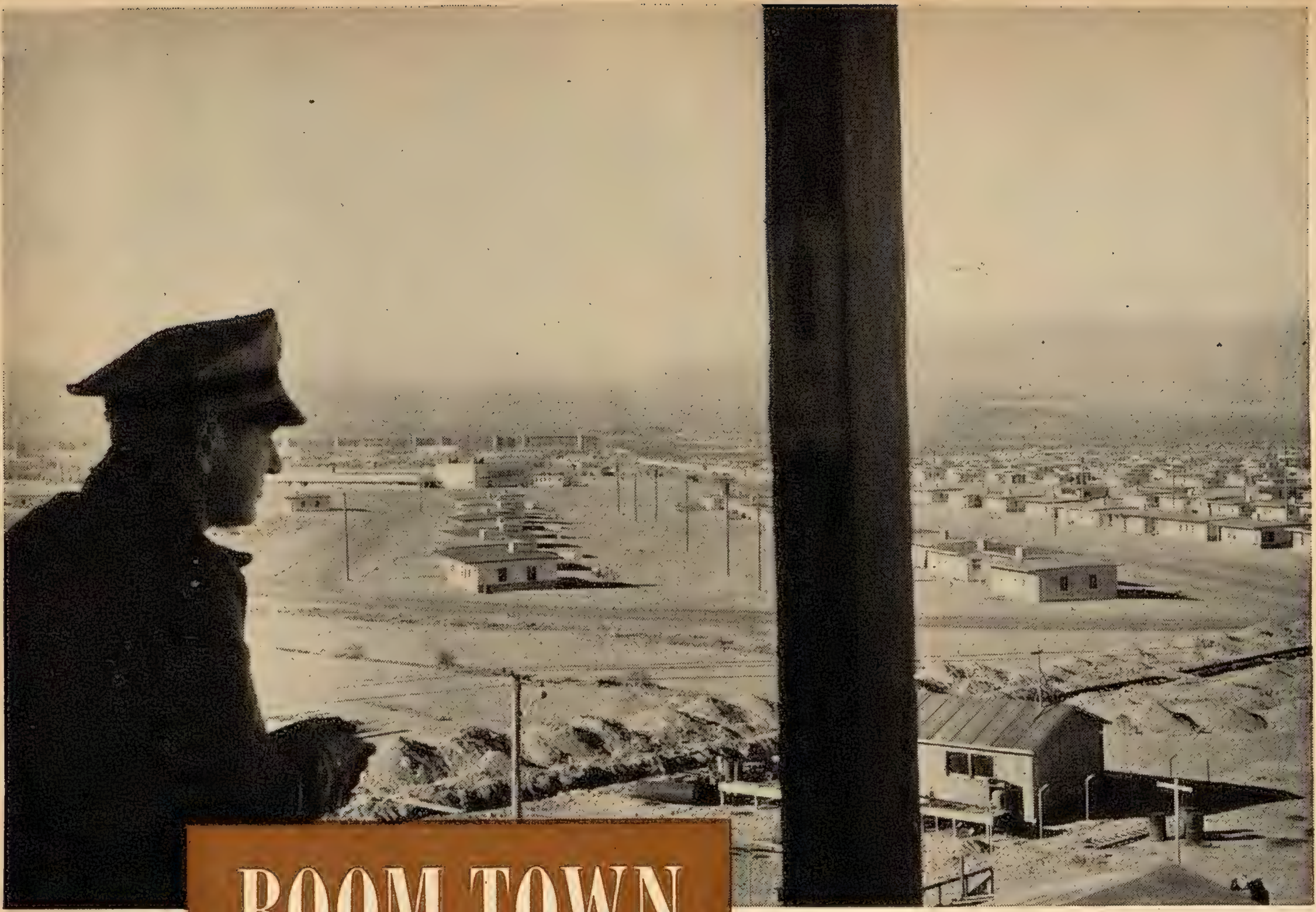
THAT is what Lieutenant Sammons says, and you can believe him. But other members of his crew admit to being scared. But they are scared only in retrospect. They think back and say, "I sure was scared there for a minute," but they never speak of being scared beforehand. After Rouen, for Lieutenant Sammons and the crew of the Dinah Mite, came Rotterdam, St. Omer and some others—and then Lille. Lieutenant Sammons preferred to talk about Lille because, in the first place, it was fresh in his memory, and also because from his point of view it was the most successful operation in which he had participated, as well as the most exciting.

It was highly successful because the most damage was done to the target, and it was the most exciting because the ship had its largest number of enemy encounters on the return.

They all knew the evening before that there was to be a raid and that they were to go on it—but they didn't know where. They were awakened at four-thirty in the morning on that Saturday, last October 10, and after they had breakfasted they went to the briefing room at group headquarters. There the crews of the squadrons which were to participate in the raid were assembled, and there, behind locked doors and with armed guards stationed outside, they learned for the first time that the primary target was to be the Lille Steel and Engineering Works.

That half-hour session in the briefing room was as accurate and as complete a forecast of the Lille raid as was humanly possible. The crews were told the rendezvous at which the bombers would meet their fighter escort, at what time and what altitude. They were given information on the weather they would encounter, the location of antiaircraft batteries and of enemy airdromes adjacent to their route; they were shown enlarged reconnaissance photographs of the target and its surrounding territory; they were

(*Continued on page 44*)



A plant guard in a watchtower looks out over the thousand-unit housing development.

BOOM TOWN with a SOMBRERO

First Boulder Dam, then the tourists, and now the biggest magnesium plant in the world have made Las Vegas depression-proof and a gambling heaven

BY ALYCE CANFIELD

A SHOT rings out. Through the gray morning a tall figure runs from the doorway of a hotel and down an alley. In the hotel lobby blazing lights shine down on the still figure of the night clerk. The safe has been jimmied. The killer is gone. Perhaps he already is casually mingling with the crowds on Fremont Street, a block away, where all-night cafés blare canned music to the dawn-gray street. For this is wild and woolly Las Vegas, Nevada —1943 edition!

Sure, murders happen in every state in the Union. But not with a carnival backdrop. Not to the whir of roulette wheels and the clink of silver dollars. Not under a jewel-studded night which mocks the tinsel splendor of neon lights.

Although Las Vegas has much of the old West about it, something new has been added. It is incredibly prosperous, high-keyed, and fast-paced. Bars and gambling casinos line its streets. Where sweat-begrimed miners in dust-caked boots once watched the chips fall and the croupier rake them away, newly rich construction workers now stand beside young divorcees in silver-fox capes and together watch the magic wheel go round.

Because Las Vegas was building Boulder Dam, it never felt the Great Depression. Townspeople expected a slump at its completion, but were swamped with an avalanche of 600,000 tourists a year who came to see the highest dam in the world. With the war, the $10,000,000 Las Vegas Gunnery School brought the wives and sweethearts of thousands of soldiers to Las Vegas and jammed to capacity all housing.

Then came the giant, dwarfing everything that had gone before—the history-making No. 1 wartime project—$125,000,000 Basic Magnesium, Inc., largest magnesium plant in the world. Breathing gold dust and spouting dollars, it dumped into the city of Las Vegas every week its fabulous $1,000,000 pay roll. Overnight its 13,500 workers tripled the population.

Basic Magnesium is using money as men use air. It has built a huge plant. Its workers have fought and licked the desert, mountains, and searing sun to get water from Lake

Mead (backwater of Boulder Dam and largest artificial lake in the world) to the plant. Company construction men straddled the bleak hills with towers and strung them with copper to bring electricity to the job. Flood-control works, storm drains, and a whole sanitary sewer and sewage-disposal system were also designed and constructed. It's a herculean job. Big, tough—and expensive. But by May the plant will be equipped to produce in excess of a hundred million pounds of magnesium a year.

Why this speed for magnesium? Because thousands upon thousands of tons of magnesium is needed by every aircraft factory in the world, because it is *lighter* than aluminum and just as strong. The lighter the plane the faster it is. Moreover, every fifth bullet from an airplane machine gun is a tracer—made of magnesium. We need them by the millions—to help our gunners see their targets. And when an American bomber swoops down over a blacked-out Jap city, he drops a flare so he can see where to "lower the tailgate." Those flares are made of magnesium. Our flyers need tons of them. When Tokyo goes up in flames, incendiary bombs will start the conflagration. Incendiary bombs are made from magnesium. That's why the hurry, that's why the $125,000,000 push behind Basic Magnesium, Inc.

The revenue from gambling in Las Vegas runs into millions.

Wherever big money rolls in, boom-town conditions exist, and with the advent of a pay roll which zigzagged from $750,000 to $1,000,000 every Friday night, living conditions unprecedented in our history have been created in Las Vegas.

The personnel of Basic Magnesium plus families of soldiers from Camp McCarran and Camp Williston skyrocketed rents, and there they stay, rent ceilings to the contrary. Girls are still living in auto courts and splitting rents of $170 a month for three people. Single rooms with community baths and no cooking facilities range from sixty to ninety dollars a month, and they are at a premium. People live in camps, in trailers, in caves and makeshift sheet-metal lean-tos. Men earning $100 a week live in shacks. One year after the start of construction, living conditions are still so crowded that public health is menaced.

And, in spite of this, public health officials say that there is no bed in any hospital in Las Vegas for communicable diseases. It would seem the city of Las Vegas is sitting on a keg of dynamite.

Makeshift lean-tos house many of the boom town's population.

The citizens claim the locust-like population was dumped on them; that because the Basic Magnesium workers and the soldiers do not own property, there is no way to tax them for facilities which would relieve the situation.

Nevada has no sales tax, no inheritance or income tax; the state has no bonded indebtedness, and by constitutional amendment the tax rate is never over five dollars. This is a bonanza for big capital, a boon to the small home owner, but it doesn't pay for schools, hospitals, or other public works to care for the increase in population.

A SHINING new $283,000 hospital, the best equipped of its kind in the United States, is Basic's way of taking care of its own. Supervised by Josephine Cunningham Lacey, the hospital has forty-two beds, ten bassinets. Twenty-four nurses live in the Nurses' Home.

There are eight grammar and four high-school classrooms at Basic, overcrowded in spite of the fact that classes are doubled up, half the children attending school in the morning, the balance in the afternoon. Facilities now in course of construction will double school capacity.

The new population feels that many local landlords and merchants are taking advantage of the situation and are basking in the profits of cutthroat prices. "One thing you can depend on," said a defense worker bitterly: "the city may not be taxing us, but we'll never leave the state with a dollar we've earned. It all goes just to live!"

Combating the living conditions for Basic workers, the company—through the Defense Plant Corporation—has already built one thousand 100-per-cent electrically equipped homes across from the plant. These houses were called "demountables," to get by local opposition, but are really permanent structures. Rent, unfurnished, ranges from forty-four to fifty-two dollars a month, including all utilities.

A huge camp housing 4,000 men in dormitories and tents has gone up near the plant. Here 20,000 meals a day are served in a dining room that covers half an acre, with a kitchen and service crew of 350. Over 200 trailer camps have mushroomed overnight, and some camps have as many as 600 trailers. More "demountables" are in construction; more trailers are ordered. Basic could use 1,000 more men tomorrow if it could provide living accommodations for them.

More fair than many local long-time residents (who in some instances saw a chance to pay for their homes in a few months because of the terrific housing shortage) is square-shooting Tom Oakey, real-estate man, who built Huntridge, a suburb of 4,000 homes. His houses cost $5,000. There is no down payment. The purchaser signs a rental option to pay fifty dollars a month. Any time within thirty months the renter can declare his intention to purchase and meanwhile can build up his equity.

A conscientious effort is being made by the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce to win over newcomers, to acquaint them with the part Nevada is playing in the war effort. Emphasizing the role the new great white metal is playing in winning this war, Las Vegas recalls that it was the silver of the Comstock Lode, the greatest strike in the history of the world, that saved the Union during the Civil War.

I SERVED ON BATAAN
By Juanita Redmond
is an army nurse's own story of her experiences in the Philippines from the day of the first Jap bombing. There are no deliberate dramatics in her account of what happened at Manila, on Bataan and Corregidor, yet drama is there in the facts as she sets them down. Here is a book you *must* not miss.
Next Week in Liberty
Abridged to one evening's reading time

Moving in to share the wealth is outside capital which has built palatial resort hotels. First on the scene was Tom Hull's $425,000 El Rancho Vegas, which boasts of a swimming pool, dining room, bar, casino, and cottages. Smart divorcees like Martha Mature made this swank spot their headquarters. And local Basic Magnesium workers jammed the dining room to see the floor show.

A hotel in the heart of the business district came next. Leonard Hicks' $180,000 El Cortez, which immediately became the meeting place of local business men.

Bob Brooks, coining money in two night spots in Beverly Hills and Hollywood, invested $400,000 in a hotel, complete with swimming pool, night club, casino, bar, and café. And, in addition, he put up two-bedroom bungalows that look like a whole suburb, facing a paved street with lawns and landscaping. He called the whole thing Bob Brooks' Nevada Biltmore.

R. E. Griffith, who owns and operates some 200 theaters in the Western states, has hired top architect Bill Moore to outdistance the pack. His Hotel Last Frontier, a $550,000 layout, hits every tourist in the eye. Here are hotel rooms, outside cottages, a dining room with orchestra, two bars, and a casino, swimming pools, lush green lawns, and a field where rodeos are held every Sunday.

Definitely big outside capital does not believe Las Vegas' prosperity a flash in the pan. Too much money has been invested in permanent industry to have Las Vegas collapse after the war. The city is on the crest of a boom that will last a hundred years and may go on from there. That is the prediction of the president of the telephone company, Ed Clark, who came to Las Vegas in a stagecoach in his mother's arms.

First there was $212,000,000 Boulder Dam transforming a snowflake in the Colorado mountains to a kilowatt in Los Angeles. Its power is the life blood of the entire Southwest.

Then came the Las Vegas Gunnery School and McCarran Airport, at a construction cost of $10,000,000. United States Senator Jim Scrugham of Nevada fathered a pilot manganese plant at Boulder City, a $1,000,000 investment. From this has sprung the $8,000,000 plant of the Manganese Ore Company. Two roads, one costing $6,500,000 and the other $175,000 lead from Basic Magnesium to the manganese plant and to Las Vegas.

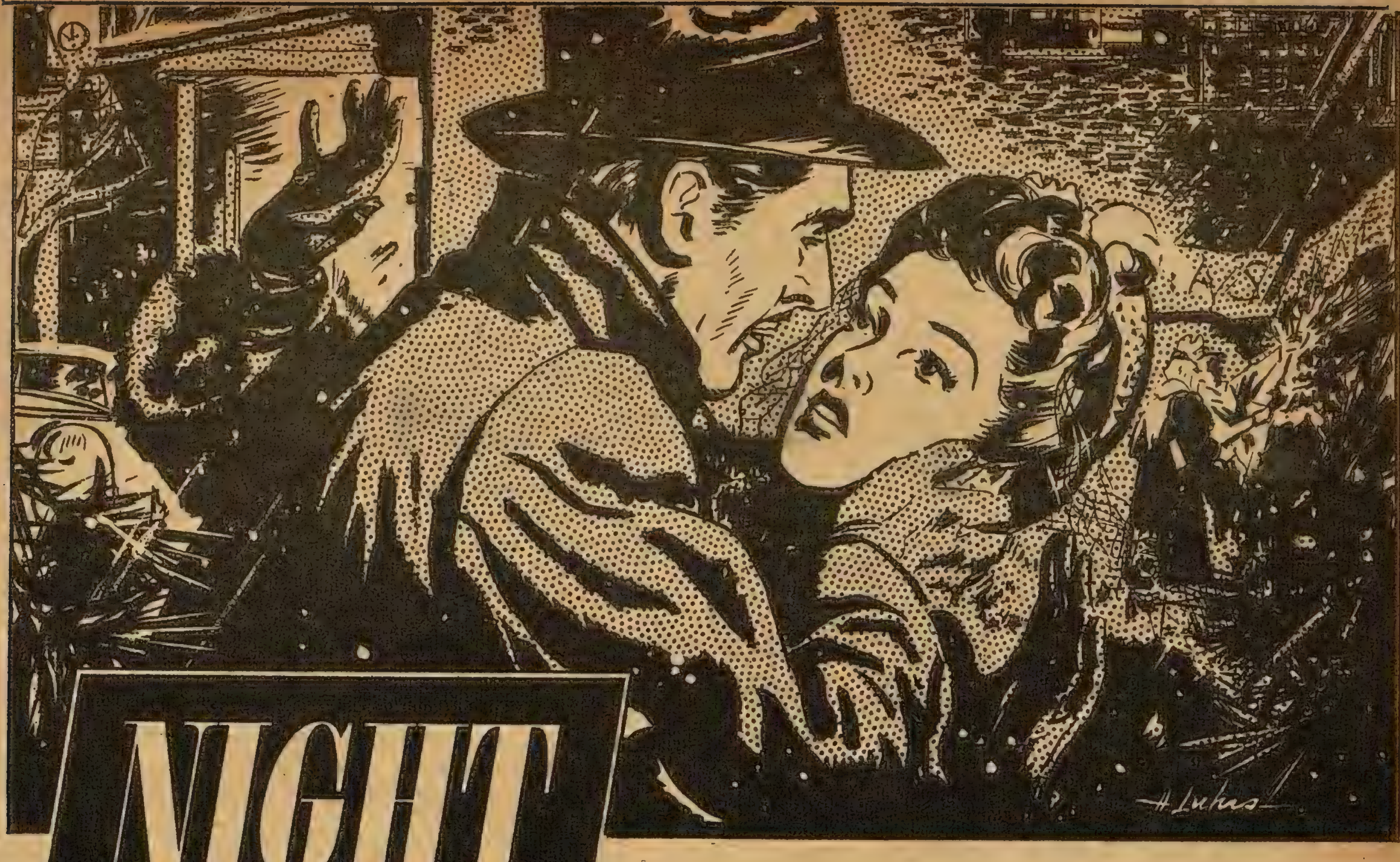
Next year Las Vegas will have the $43,000,000 Davis Dam. And Boulder Dam, usually thought of as completed, is now installing sixteen of the largest generators ever built, at a cost of $2,225,000 each.

THERE is the $2,000,000 Shoemaker Wallboard Company, mining gypsum; the Blue Diamond Mine, a $4,500,000 investment. Add to this a group of men who are dreaming dreams of irrigation for the desert, to tap the enormous agricultural resources, and you have good solid industry that has come to stay.

Basic Magnesium, once its war job is done, is expected to revolutionize the light-metal industry by producing magnesium for the manufacture of autos, ships, refrigerators, kitchen equipment, and many other articles.

The liberal laws will always bring tourists. The revenue from gambling goes into the millions. There are slot machines even in grocery stores. Nevada's quick marriage and divorce laws brought 22,500 people to Las Vegas last year, and the Justice of the Peace made more money than the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

THE END



NIGHT SHIFT

A Liberty BOOK CONDENSATION

READING TIME ONE EVENING

A Novel By
MARITTA WOLFF

Sally Otis could have been just a waitress to a casual observer, but in these pages her deep love for Roy, her care and anxiety for her children and her home, for her sister Virginia and her brother Joe reveal her as a brave, warm modern wife you will long remember.

And in contrast to her, there is Petey, the night-club singing sister who brings both excitement and help to Sally when she needs them most.

THE dinner business at Toresca's restaurant was slow that night. Sally Otis, trim in her green-and-white uniform, stood beside an empty table with a stack of menus in her hand. Alertly she watched the last table of diners in her section, waiting to serve them their dessert. Another of the waitresses walked up and joined Sally.

"Sammy Toresca says you can go off now if you want," she said.

Sally turned to her with her quick, warm, wide-lipped smile. "Gee, thanks, Lee, that's swell! Business is slow tonight, all right."

Lee shifted her weight to one foot and dabbed at the curls across the back of her head. "I just heard somebody talkin'. There was an accident out to the Kelton works this afternoon. You got a brother workin' out to Kelton's, ain't you?" Lee asked, her fingers still busy with the stiff little curls.

"Yeah," Sally said worriedly. "My brother Joe works out there, and Johnny O'Connor—the O'Connors got an apartment in the same house where we live. You didn't hear 'em say what—"

"Naw," Lee said. "They just said there was an accident 'n' somebody got killed."

Sally's eyes drifted back to her table again, but the worried look was still on her face. Lee shifted her weight to the other foot and raised her little stack of menus up to her lips. "Ain't he something, though!" she murmured, with a sort of wistful awe in her voice.

"Who's that?" Sally asked automatically, her eyes still on the diners.

"Nicky Toresca. Who yuh think I'm talkin' about?" Lee went on talking softly. "Ain't he swell-looking? I sure could go for him, if I got the chance! They say he changes women like he changes his shirts!"

Sally smiled. "Why, I don't know," she said. "I never seen him. I've heard about him, but—"

"You dope!" Lee hissed behind the menus. "He's here right now. He's been in two or three times lately!"

Sally turned to Lee with her eyes widening. "Honest? You mean the big boss? I thought he spent all his time at the night club. I thought he let Sammy run this place alone. Which one is he?"

"He's alone to that walltable toward the back—see?"

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Sally looked down the length of the room. The man at the table by the wall sat slouched back in his chair, a cup of coffee in front of him and a cigarette dangling from his lips. He wore a gray suit with immaculate shirt, tie, and handkerchief. His hair was sleek black, his face dark and smooth and expressionless. Just then he turned his head a little, his eyes moving idly, and suddenly he looked directly at them. He kept on looking, his face not changing expression at all.

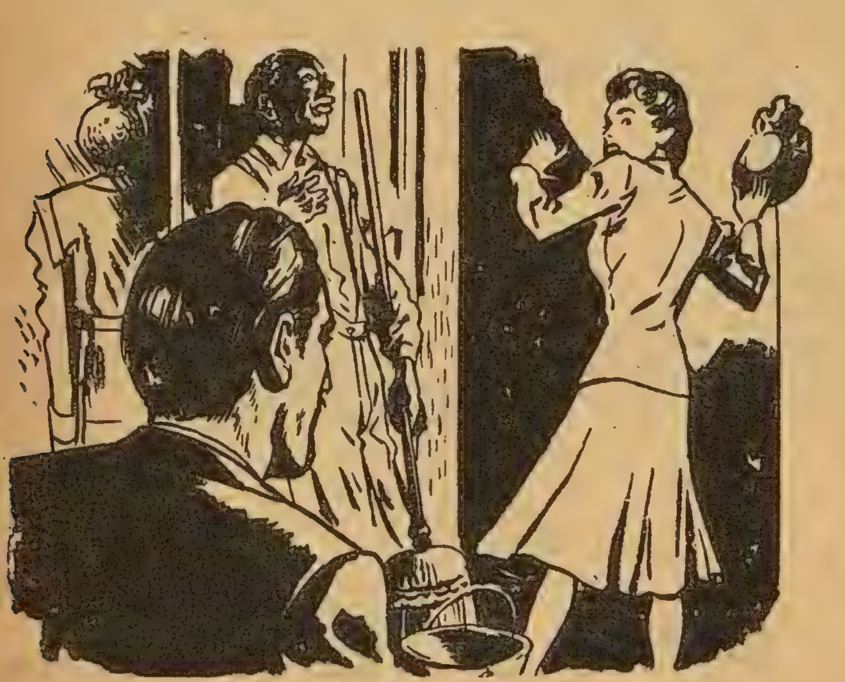
Sally looked away hastily, but Lee continued to stare.

"I wish those folks would hurry up and have their dessert," Sally said. "I got supper to get when I get home."

Lee was still looking toward Nicky Toresca's table. "Look, honey," she said. "You go ahead, if you want, I'll give 'em their dessert when they're ready. I just as soon. I ain't in no hurry."

"Would you? Aw, thanks a lot, Lee."

She handed her menus to Lee and hurried toward the back of the restaurant. She pushed open the unmarked door at the back that led into the employees' washroom. It was a small, bare, cold room, with a toilet cubicle in one corner, in the other a washbowl with a small mirror hanging above it, and hooks along one wall where coats were hung. Sally was across the room in a flash and grabbed a worn black-and-white coat and a blue felt hat from one of the hooks.



She leaned close to the mirror to remove the pins that secured the little green-and-white cap to her hair. The light was poor, just the one dim bulb hanging from the cord above her head.

She didn't hear the door opening quietly. He came up behind her, walking lightly on the balls of his feet, without a sound. When he took hold of her shoulders, Sally jumped, her hat fell to the floor, and she made a little frightened strangling sound in her throat. She turned around quickly, and Nicky Toresca pulled her toward him, his face bent down to kiss her. She jerked away from him so hard that she fell back against the edge of the washbowl. Her face was white and frightened. "Don't do that," she said in a small shaky voice.

Nicky Toresca's face was unperturbed and a little amused. He stood easily in front of her, his hands in his pockets. He laughed a little, with a faint mockery in his voice.

"You're done work now. Is that right?" he said. "So put your hat on and I'll take you home."

As he spoke he bent down smoothly from the waist and picked up her hat from the floor. Sally caught the odor of the oil on his sleek hair, and then he offered her the hat. She took it automatically and held it with unsteady hands.

Her face looked desperate and she licked her lips a little before she spoke. "Thanks a lot," she said, "but I can't. I—I—have to meet my sister."

The door opened again, but noisily this time. It was the Negro boy who cleaned up the back rooms. He came in banging his mop and pail against the doorframe.

Nicky Toresca spun around toward him. "What you doin', busting in here?" he said angrily.

It was to Sally that the boy looked first—one swift glance—and then he looked up at Nicky Toresca, his eyes rolling nervously. "I'm sorry, Mist' Toresca," he said. "I sure didn't know you-all was in here. I jus' come in to clean up like I always do. I didn't know—"

Nicky Toresca's voice was taut with anger. "So you come busting in before the girls are outa here, even. So maybe I should teach you to knock on doors."

"I sure am sorry, Mist' Toresca!" The boy backed out.

Sally moved then, rushing across the floor and crowding out the door with him.

"I'm late for my bus. I guess I gotta run," she mumbled to nobody in particular.

She hurried through the restaurant and out that front door blindly. She was almost to the bus stop before she became aware of the sharp cold wind blowing at her hair and ears and remembered that she was still carrying her hat in her hand.

In Sally's apartment, Virginia, her younger sister, stood at the sink, preparing supper for the family. Preoccupied, she turned slowly as footsteps sounded in the hall, and Gloria O'Connor, their next-door neighbor, danced in.

"Look what I got! Just look what I got! Ain't it gorgeous?" Gloria twirled around in front of the table like an excited child. What she had come to show off was obviously the chubby jacket of shiny black long-haired fur that she was wearing over her faded house dress. But it was hard to look at anything else except Gloria herself, because Gloria O'Connor was beautiful—more beautiful than a lot of the girls in the movies and on the magazine covers.

"It's awfully nice, Gloria," Virginia said. "It looks wonderful on you. Black is a good color for you."

"Isn't it just gorgeous?" Gloria said happily, stroking the fur lovingly. "It's my Christmas present from Johnny. I couldn't see no sense in waitin' till Christmas. I'd rather have it right away."

"It's an awfully nice Christmas present," Virginia said. "And you look swell in it, Gloria."

The door was thrown open with a bang, and a warm voice with a lilt to it sang out, "Well, hello, people!"

"Hi, Sally!"

Sally and Virginia looked alike, except that Sally was older, a little heavier, her face fuller. She wore the green-and-white uniform of the restaurant.

"Gloria O'Connor, if you didn't get a fur coat for Christmas! Honest, that husband o' yours is so crazy about you that it wouldn't surprise me none if some day he come bringin' you home everything they had in the store. Ginny, you've got everything pretty near done! Why didn't you wait and let me help?"

She talked so fast that no one had a chance to say a word.

GLORIA twisted in front of her delightedly, showing the fur jacket. "Don't you just love it, Sally?"

Sally rubbed her fingers along the shiny dark fur. "Why, this is the nicest fur coat I ever saw in my life!"

Gloria was glowing with delight at Sally's appreciation. "You can wear it sometime, Sally," she said impulsively. "If you're ever goin' out some place."

Sally looked at the alarm clock on top of the cupboard. "Gosh, I wonder what's keepin' Joe and Johnny. It makes me nervous. I heard there was an accident out to Kelton's."

Gloria looked at the clock too, and her mind apparently reverted to a previous train of thought. "Is it time for Johnny to come home already?" she said. "My gosh, I ain't even got the table cleared off from breakfast or stuff bought for supper or nothing. I guess Johnny 'n' me'll have to eat out tonight."

"Well, if you got anything to eat in the icebox, bring it over here," Sally said, "and we'll all eat together."

"Well—" Gloria said. "Gee, I dunno. I kinda thought it would be fun to go out an' eat. I kinda wanted to dress up and wear my new coat and everything."

"That would be nice," Sally said. "You can leave the baby here, if you want to go out."

"I guess maybe we will," Gloria said.

"Somebody's coming in now," Virginia said. "I heard somebody in the hall."

They all were quiet to listen. Footsteps came up to the door, and the door opened and somebody yelled, "Hey, anybody around here know who stole my wife?"

And the next moment Johnny O'Connor appeared in the kitchen door. He had a dark blue jacket flung around his shoulders and a dark felt hat on the side of his head, both of them powdered with light snow. And both of his hands were wrapped in white bandaging.

"What'sa matter with your hands?" Gloria said. "How come you got your hands all done up like that?"

Johnny turned to her instantly. "Glory be!" he said softly. There was a kind of special tenderness all over his slim mobile face when he looked at her. He put his arms around her and kissed her gently.

"Well, I'll tell you about my hands," he said. "They got next to a hot piece of steel today, and, would you believe it, they got warm!"

"Oh," she said vaguely. She squirmed out of his arms. "Look, my coat come today! Don't it look swell?"

"Well, I'll say it looks swell," Johnny said. "You look like a million dollars. Just look at her!"

"You burn your hands bad, Johnny?" Virginia asked him.

"We heard there was an accident," Sally said. "Was it bad?"

"And how!" Johnny said. "It was a helluva thing! A Polish guy named Stan Walezewski. Maybe you heard Joe talk about him. He works on the chromium line, right there next to Joe."

Sally shook her head. "I never heard Joe say. What happened? Joe wasn't—"

"No; Joe's all right," Johnny said quickly. "Except it hit him pretty hard. He was right next to the guy when it happened. I been looking for Joe every place, Fry's and the Rail and all the drinking places. I finally give up. I thought he mighta come on home."

"And what's it to yuh!"

THEY all jumped and turned. Joe Braun stood still, just inside the door. He was not quite steady on his feet, and his dingy overcoat hung open on his gangling tall figure. His face was white and sullen, with a stretched look about it, as if at any moment all of the muscles might get out of control and start to twitch and quiver. He brought a strong odor of alcohol into the small warm room with him.

Sally broke the silence first. "Well, hi, Joe!" Her voice was light and gay, with just a little effort. "You're late, mister. A few minutes more 'n' you woulda missed your supper."

Joe still didn't say anything.

"Hey, Johnny," Gloria said accusingly, "you was tellin' about the guy gettin' hurt over to the factory. Did the guy get killed?"

Joe Braun made a funny noise in his throat and walked over and sat down in the chair suddenly. "Naw, he didn't get killed," Joe said.

He kept smiling at them. "The guard rail broke," he said. "He fell in the vat. It boiled him."

"My, that's awful," Gloria said in her slow, unmoved voice. "I betcha he dies."

Joe Braun laughed. "I wouldn't be surprised an' you're right," he said unpleasantly. He kept looking from one to another of them. There was a defiance in his eyes and a kind of malice. "You shoulda seen him. He kept grabbin' for something all the while he was fallin', but there wasn't nothin' for him to get hold of. You oughta heard him holler when—"

"Cut it out, Joe," Johnny O'Connor said.

Joe stopped talking, and his eyes came to rest on Johnny's face. Johnny looked back at him steadily. Joe's eyes were still at last, held quiet by Johnny's blue ones; but the rest of his face was breaking up and shifting.

"Yeah. Sure. Take it easy!" he said wildly. "I tell you, I saw it happen. I was working right next to him. I heard the way he hollered! An' I know what's eatin' you, just like all the rest a' them. Hell—you think I was sucker enough to go foolin' around on them slippery boards tryin' to fish him outa there, no guard rail or nothin'? Why, it's a wonder them guys that got him out didn't slip off in there, too. I knew he was a goner, all right, soon as I seen him fall. You think I was sucker enough to try to—"

Joe dropped his head into his hands, and Sally spoke to him helplessly. "Aw, Joe, it's all right! We don't wanta hear nothing more about it. Don't talk about it any more, or think about it. It's all right, Joe."

Joe yanked his face up out of his hands.

"O. K. So I always been scared of them vats, and what's it to you!" he said wildly. "They drive me nuts. I'm washed up. I ain't goin' back there. I never wanta see them vats again as long as I—"

"All right, Joe. O. K. You don't have to go back there—nobody's trying to make you. What you need right now is a drink. How about you and me—"

Joe jumped up suddenly and pushed past Johnny to the door. They heard the sound of his stumbling over a chair, and the living-room door flung open with a bang.

"Joe, wait!" Sally called. "Where are you going, Joe? Don't go, Joe. Joe, listen to me!"

But at the kitchen door she stopped. They already heard the sound of his stumbling, running feet on the stairs.

MUCH later that same night, when the apartment was dark and quiet and everybody was sleeping, Sally lay sleepless in her bed. She lay on her back and stared into the darkness. After a while she heard a light rapping on the door. It startled her. She couldn't think who it could be, knocking like this late at night. Her feet groped on the cold floor boards hunting for her slippers. Then she pattered out into the living room. She didn't turn on a light, because Virginia slept on the davenport.

Sally sprang the night lock and opened the door softly. It was Johnny O'Connor standing on the other side of the door.

"Look, Sally," he said. "I got to thinking about Joe, so I went around to some of the places, keeping an eye open for him. He's over to Nicky Toresca's night club, still drinking."

Sally started in the dim light, and her hand rose up toward her mouth involuntarily. "Nicky Toresca's?" There was an odd sound to her voice. "I didn't know Joe ever hung around Toresca's."

"I guess he must," Johnny said, "because they seemed to know who Joe was. I didn't talk to Joe myself. He was sitting at a table drinking with some other fellow. But I talked to Nicky a minute before I left. Nicky said to leave him where he was and not to worry about him, that he'd see to it he got sobered up and back here tomorrow morning."

"I didn't know Joe knew Nicky Toresca," Sally said again in a worried voice.

"I think he'll be all right over there. Maybe better off than at home, the way he was feeling tonight."

"Well, thanks a lot, Johnny," Sally said. "I was worried about Joe. I couldn't sleep tonight to save me. Now I feel better."

"Well, don't you worry about Joe any more. He'll be all right."

"Thanks a lot, Johnny," Sally said again. "I don't know what we'd do around here without you."

"Yup, the indispensable man," he said, grinning, as he turned away. They said good night together, and Sally slipped back inside the door.

She went out to the kitchen. It always looked strange to her at night. It was cold and unnaturally empty of people, and of dirty dishes littering the table and piled in the sink. She sat alone, shivering a little with the cold, and tracing what was left of the pattern on the worn oilcloth table cover with her finger. All the trouble and worry in her mind unrolled and mounted like the streamer of smoke from the tip of her cigarette. Worry over money, and worry over Joe, worry over what had happened with Nicky Toresca at the restaurant this afternoon. It had always seemed to her that she worked for Nicky's brother, Sammy—but Nicky really owned the place, after all, and if he wanted to hang around and bother her, what could she do next? How would she explain to Roy?

There she was now back at the thing that worried her most, and all the time. Now she realized that what was really keeping her awake was worry over the visit that she would pay to Roy tomorrow afternoon. Funny, how you could look forward to a visit so much and still dread it. Oh, she missed Roy so—they needed him so! The kids—Harold was getting older now—he needed to have his father. And the little kids, Marilyn and Buddy—they grew so fast and changed so much and forgot so many things. Why, it was almost as if their father was a stranger to them right now. And she needed Roy too—a great need deep down in herself for him all the while, day or night, whatever she did, wherever she went. It wasn't only because of Nicky she needed her husband near to her and now. It was a need of her own, a steady, hungry need for Roy as he used to be.

Sally got up suddenly, crushed out her cigarette, and padded back through the darkened rooms to her bed.

VIRGINIA heard her, because Virginia, too, was wide awake this night.

This was a crazy town, Virginia thought. There wasn't any real nighttime here. There was never a time when a part of the population wasn't up and doing, coming to and from work, going to movies, eating in hamburger places. Twenty-four hours of the day, all the day and all the night. She didn't like it and she couldn't get used to it. She hated this town.

But she shouldn't think that, Virginia reminded herself guiltily. After all, where would she be if Sally hadn't given her a home here? The trouble, Virginia thought, is that she missed Bill so, and he didn't even write to her. Maybe Bill was sick; maybe he had lost his job and was too discouraged to tell her about it. Or maybe he had been hurt in the factory. Virginia thought about the accident in the bumper factory today, and her heart almost stopped beating. But wouldn't Bill's mother write and let her know if he was sick or hurt or anything like that? Or would she? Maybe his draft questionnaire had come. Why, maybe Bill was in the army somewhere right this minute!

A hoarse-throated factory whistle blew some place in the wind and darkness—two long toots and a short one. Automatically Virginia's mind became busy with translation in spite of herself. That was the whistle from the tire factory. Let's see—two long blasts and one short one—why, that meant they needed electricians in the pit.

For some idiotic reason, that seemed to be almost the last straw to Virginia. She rolled over on her stomach and smothered her face in her pillow and felt the warm tears ooze out of her eyes and wet the pillow slip.

The next morning the porch steps were slippery with the light coating of snow over them, and Sally slid on the thin soles of her shoes. Her breath, white in the air, enveloped her face in a moment, like a veil. Once she was down on the sidewalk, she ran toward the corner. She looked up, and saw, to her relief, that a little group of people were huddled together in front of the drugstore. The bus hadn't gone yet. She crossed the street just as it came around the curve, and she clambered aboard. She found the lever on the seat by which the back was lowered and adjusted it to a comfortable recline. At this stage of her journey she always closed up her mind tight. She didn't think about anything—not where she was going or why, or even who she was.

The bus left the town behind and took a broad smoothly paved highway through the open country. On either side of the road the bleak, partially snow-covered fields stretched away, unfertile-looking land, with a look about it today as if it were pinched with cold. It wouldn't be long now, Sally kept thinking, if she kept looking off to the horizon over there to the right—it wouldn't be long now before she would see it. And then suddenly she saw it—away off there on the horizon to the right of the highway. Tan-colored brick walls rising up stark from the land. Neat tan brick buildings set together in precise relationship of rows. No trees here, not even fences; just wide open fields, and in the midst of them the tan brick buildings lined up each to each in order and precision in the pattern of a square.

The road curved, the brick boxes loomed closer, and suddenly the bus stopped.

"All out for State Hospital," the driver said tonelessly. Sally climbed out of her seat.

Inside the building, there was an atmosphere of teeming life and activity in sudden contrast to the deserted, lifeless appearance of the exterior. There were faint sounds of voices and footsteps, and the air was filled with the high, muted ringing of the bells that summoned doctors to various parts of the hospital.

The heavy, dark-haired woman behind the desk smiled at Sally. "Why, hello there, Mrs. Otis. How are you?" She slid her finger swiftly down a list of names. "Otis—Otis, Roy," she murmured. "Ah, yes. Here we are."

With the pretty nurse who came presently, Sally walked the familiar corridors until they came around a corner in the hallway—and there, standing in the doorway to a single room, was Roy. Tall and thin, brown trousers and a faded blue shirt open at the neck. Oh, he had aged so much here, Sally thought despairingly. He had aged so much!

"Hello, darling!" she called out, with her voice tender and a little thick with feeling.

He said, "Sally," and came to meet her, walking slowly, his hands outstretched and his face working a little.

"Darling, how are you?" Sally said incoherently.

He took her in his arms gently, crushing the few packages she had brought him, and held her close against him. He didn't say anything. He just stood there holding her, as if he would never let her go again.

"Have a good visit," the nurse said. She went out, adjusting the door carelessly so that it stood wide open.

Sally and Roy sat together silently then, and looked at each other. The room was almost oppressively small and plain, with the bare white walls, the hospital bed, the plain empty metal table, the one window with the thick screen of metal and beyond that the bars.

"How are you, Sally?" he said at last. "You ain't workin' too hard, are you? You look tired; you look like you're worrying. Ain't nothin' the matter, is it?"

Sally laughed at him. "You silly! Of course there isn't anything the matter! I'm not working too hard. I feel fine. Virginia does just about all the housework. She's been just wonderful with the kids, and taking hold with the work and everything."

He looked at her hard before he spoke.

"Have you seen the doctor yet?"

"Not today," Sally said. "But I want to see him before I leave, so I guess I'll have to kind of cut our visit short this time."

Roy nodded. "By now he oughta know for sure about my Christmas parole."

"Oh, I was planning to see him."

HE looked at his cigarette carefully. He was trying to keep his face steady, but his chin was quivering a little. "And you'll be glad—you will be glad, won't you, Sally? You want me to come home for Christmas—you want me to come home, don't you, Sally?"

"Oh, Roy," she said. It was such an effort for her to keep the tears back that her whole face stretched tight. "Roy!"

Oh, God, she was thinking, how can I sit still in the chair like this? How can I just sit here and smile and act gay and flip, and keep my hands off him? It's too much for them to ask of me. It's too much! I'm only human. I can't stand it when he feels like this.

She leaned close to him across the table, the tears shining in her eyes. He reached out and cupped her face with his hand. "I'm sorry, honey. I didn't wanta make you feel bad. It's just that sometimes I get to thinkin' about things, and I can't stop, and I get all mixed up, and— I know, Sally—I know how swell you are. The way you acted when I got sick, the way you write to me and come to see me every chance you get. I guess you're the best wife any guy ever had."

Sally smiled and dropped her face and kissed his hand, and then she sat up straight in her chair again. "You're not such a bad husband, either, Mr. Otis."

They laughed together, and the room suddenly became warm and cheerful and pleasant. They could both feel it.

They sat quietly together for a moment, with the memories of all the happy Saturday-night dates, movies and dancing and beer, sliding by like bright beads on a string stretching between them.

Sally stirred in her chair. She looked up at him with her face shining with tenderness. "You be good and do what they tell you to, and don't worry about anything. And write, won't you? And I'll be seein' you—"

"Christmas," he prompted.

"Yeah, I'll be seein' you Christmas—and—and—just hurry up and get well, won't you, darling?"

Then he drew her into his arms. She stretched up on her toes, her arms around his neck, to kiss him. They kissed, and then he buried his face in her neck. "Little Sally!" he whispered, with a catch in his voice.

She held him tight, her hands moving on his back and shoulders, her warm body pressed to the long length of his. Then turning quickly, she left and, without looking back, descended to the office, where a perky well dressed office girl greeted her from behind the desk:

"How do you do? The doctor isn't in just now. Would you care to wait?"

"My bus leaves pretty soon," Sally said helplessly. "I wanted to talk to the doctor before I leave. It's very important."

"Oh, I see," the girl said. "Wait a minute—you're not Mrs. Otis, are you?"

"Yes. Yes, I am."

"Oh, yes. The doctor was expecting you to come in today. He spoke about it to me. He left a memorandum for you."

"Yes?" Sally was frightened for a minute, and her heart beat against her ribs loudly.

The office girl rummaged through some papers on the desk until she found a little piece of white paper torn off a desk pad. She read it over, frowning a little.

"You had applied for a Christmas parole for your husband, Roy Otis—is that right?" she said at last.

Sally murmured something in assent.

"I'm awfully sorry, Mrs. Otis," the girl said, with real sincerity in her voice, "but after reviewing the case the doctor left word for you that he cannot grant it. He doesn't believe that it would be wise, especially just at this particular stage of your husband's recovery, for him to leave the hospital."

The words sounded strange in Sally's ears, and all but meaningless. She heard herself saying rather stupidly, "Oh, there must be some mistake! He talked to my husband about it. My husband is planning on it. Why, he's so sure about it, I don't know how he'll ever—"

"I know it's a big disappointment for you," the girl said. "But I'm sure that above all you want to do what's best for your husband's recovery."

"Could I come down here Christmas Day? Could I spend Christmas afternoon with him, then?"

"I'm sorry," the girl said. "But you know the rules. No visitors whatsoever are allowed on holidays like that. It's really much better for all the patients."

Sally turned away from the desk with a kind of numbness all through her body.

VIRGINIA climbed the front steps wearily. Even the slight exertion of daily shopping was wearing to her. There was no letter waiting for her on the hall table. She had begun to give up expecting it but she still looked for it, mechanically and hopelessly, the letter from Bill that would probably never come.

She took off her coat and hat and tackled the pile of dishes in the sink, while Buddy and Marilyn romped in and out of the rooms.

"A letter come for you today in the mail, Virgie," Buddy said, on one of his stompings through the kitchen.

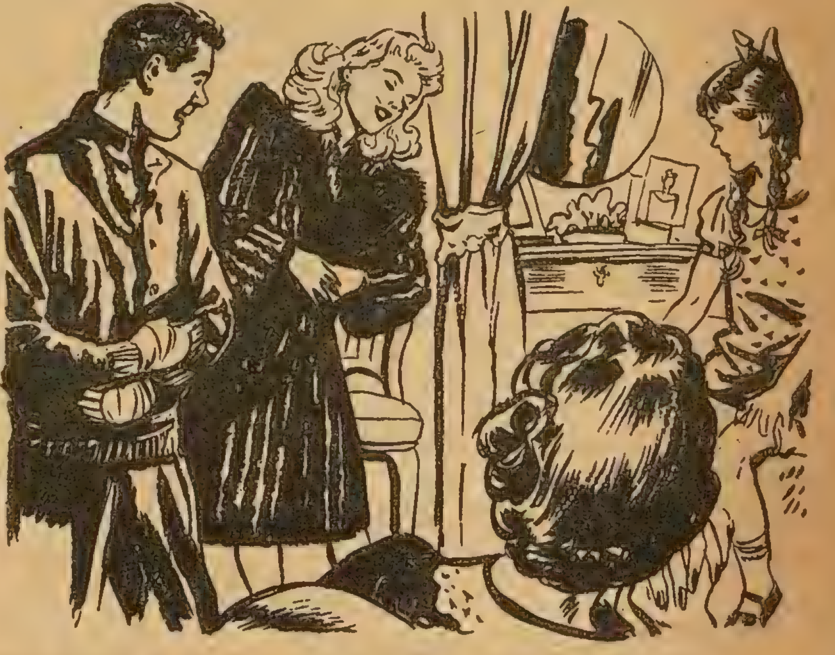
Virginia dropped a cup. It broke in three pieces and the handle scuttled across the floor under the table. She turned on him in a flash, her eyes enormous. "Why didn't you tell me? Where is it? It wasn't down on the table. What did you do with it?"

Buddy ran into the living room and came back with a bent medium-sized white envelope. Virginia looked at the envelope with a kind of curiosity. She just looked at it for a moment, and then she walked toward the door into the living room with it in her hand.

It was a very short letter, a few lines scrawled across a single sheet of paper. It took her only a moment to read it. She read it with her face set and still. When she was through, she put it into the envelope. She got up from the davenport and opened the closet door. Her old gray suitcase was on the floor. She opened the cover of the suitcase and put the envelope with a small pack like it in one of the pockets in the side of the suitcase. She closed the lid and shoved it back against the wall.

This, after all, was it . . . the letter she had waited for so long, and asked for so often, that now they all knew she was waiting for it, and teased her about it. And now they would all have to know it had come—and what it said, too.

As easily and as quickly as that it happened. Virginia just gave up. Bill was suddenly gone from her—lost, finished, done with. For so long, now, Bill had been the focus of her life. He had given her aim and direction. She wondered briefly and without emotion how in the world she was ever to go on living without him.



She heard Johnny O'Connor's voice in the kitchen talking to the children. She walked in quietly.

"Buddy tells me you got a letter—from Bill I suppose," Johnny said.

Virginia nodded.

"You don't have to tell me. I can see it's bad news. He's not running out on you . . . he's not that dumb!"

Virginia nodded again, trying to keep from crying.

"Hell, don't feel so bad, honey," Johnny comforted, "he ain't worth it; no guy is worth it. If that was all he cared about you, why, it's better you found it out now instead of later sometime. Just let him go to hell and forget about him. There are a lot of other guys around that are worth a lot more than he is. Why, some day you'll look back to this and laugh about it, Ginny."

"No, I won't," Virginia said. "I'll never laugh about this—not ever. I'll never laugh about it as long as I live!"

Johnny laughed tolerantly. "Oh, yes, you will. First thing you know, you'll meet somebody else and you'll forget this guy Bill was ever on earth. Besides, what kind of a guy was this Bill, anyway, keepin' you all upset and writing to him all the while instead of comin' right out and sayin'—"

Virginia's voice rose hysterically: "No. You haven't got any business to talk about Bill like that! Bill is the swellest and the best— This isn't his fault. He isn't to blame. He wanted to marry me. But how could we get married? How could we even plan on it? What's the use of our ever planning on anything?"

"Hey, hey, Virge! Take it easy!"

But Virginia had gone too far to stop now. "What chance did Bill and I ever have, I'd like to know! He can't get a good job till he finishes his engineering course, and it's gonna take a lot of money to do that. He has to help support his mother. He doesn't make much, working in a factory. He's got debts to pay. And now the draft—he'll probably get called in the spring. How could we ever plan on anything? It isn't my fault. You haven't got any business to say nasty things about Bill. He couldn't help this. Nor I couldn't. Nobody could. It isn't fair. We never even had a chance!"

Virginia was struggling so hard with her tears that her whole body was trembling. She pushed past Johnny out of the kitchen, and he heard the slam of the bedroom door behind her.

ON Sunday afternoon Sally hurried up the street, as usual, to catch the bus that would get her to work in time. Though it was only the middle of the afternoon, it was almost dark. A cold damp wind blew hard. Sally pulled her hat more securely down on her head as she waited on the corner. Suddenly a big shiny automobile pulled up close to her. The door on her side of the car opened. The man in the car sat behind the wheel easily, with one arm resting over it. He said, "Hello, Sally," casually, as if he were some one she had known all her life. Her heart almost stopped beating—it was Nicky Toresca.

"Get in, Sally. I'll take you downtown." Nicky's voice was low and even and unhurried. He didn't sound impatient or commanding or anything except a little amused, maybe.

She couldn't just say, "No, thank you," as she might have to any other man, and then turn away and walk off up the street. With Nicky it was different. With him it was her job, and jobs were scarce. There was her family, and there were long agonizing weeks in employment agencies with no money coming in. She tried to make her voice sound natural. Light, friendly, but not too friendly, and, most of all, casual.

"Oh, I don't want to bother you, Mr. Toresca. The bus'll be along any minute. Thanks just the same."

"No trouble," Nicky Toresca said calmly. "I'm going right by the restaurant, anyway. You don't want to wait around for no bus."

There was some part of her that was detached enough to find a kind of ironic humor in her predicament.

She heard herself say meekly, "Thank you, Mr. Toresca," and she saw herself climb meekly into the car.

Nicky Toresca handled the car easily, driving fast but not too fast, and snapping the tuning buttons of the car radio. He found some dance music and left that on, turned down low.

"It's a nasty day, huh?" he said to her. "Let's stop some place on the way downtown and have a drink."

"Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Toresca," Sally said desperately, fighting to keep her voice natural. "I'm pretty near late to work now. I haven't time to stop, honest."

The corners of Nicky Toresca's mouth twitched and he looked at her. When he spoke, there was mockery in his voice. "So you're late to work, so what? Who's gonna bawl you out? My brother Sammy, maybe? I guess you know by now he just runs the joint for me. We ought to be friendly, Sally," he said lightly. "Friends should have a drink together, huh?"

Sally looked hard at Nicky Toresca for a moment—at his smooth, blank, dark face, the cigarette dangling from his thin lips.

"Why, Mr. Toresca! I didn't think you really meant it! I didn't think a good-looking young fellow like you, all dressed up swell and everything, would really want to be seen with somebody that looks the way I do." Sally laughed quite naturally.

Nicky Toresca laughed too, the first time Sally had heard him—a dry laughter without any humor in it. When he spoke, it was exactly as if he could read her mind, as if he knew exactly what she had been thinking.

"You women!" Nicky Toresca said lightly. "Always worryin' about how you look and who'll see you! O. K., Sally; so it's a date for some other time when you have a chance to change your dress and get all prettied up special for me."

All the anger and the fight went out of Sally then. It was no use—she just wasn't any match for him.

He was bringing the car to a dead stop, with a grinding of brakes, directly in front of the door to the restaurant.

"There you are," he said.

Without turning around, while she was getting out, Sally said, "Thanks for the ride downtown," with as much dignity as she could.

"I'll be seein' you," Nicky Toresca said as he slammed the door shut again behind her.

TWO nights later, while she was still washing dishes, Sally heard Johnny O'Connor talking to the children in the living room, and in a minute he appeared in the doorway. He was in working clothes, his felt hat pulled to a jaunty angle, and he seemed to be in an inordinate good humor, even for Johnny.

"Well, hi," Sally said. "What are you grinnin' about from ear to ear? What became of that wife of yours? I heard the baby downstairs when I came home."

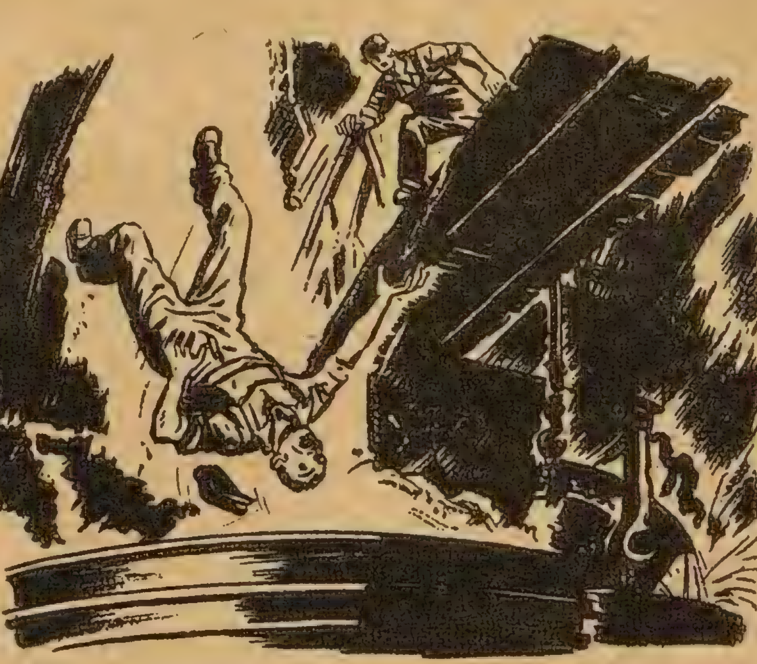
"Oh, Lord, I'm a ruined man," Johnny said, grinning. "Gloria and that friend of hers, that Anderson girl, are havin' themselves a day on the town. Christmas shopping, the movies, some new restaurant dump for dinner, and all."

"So they let you go back to work today. Your hands are all better, huh?" Sally questioned.

"My hands are fine," Johnny said shortly. He bent his fingers into a fist stiffly, and rubbed at some of the dirt and grease on the bandaging.

"How come you still have to wear bandages if they're healed up enough for you to go to work? Those bandages look awful dirty. You oughta be careful. How come the doctor didn't change the bandages when you got done work tonight?"

Johnny kept his eyes still lowered to his hands. "I guess I can change them bandages myself. I don't figure I really need 'em on any more, anyway."



Sally kept looking at him, and suddenly she put down the dish and drying towel on the shelf and put her hands on her hips. "Johnny O'Connor! Now what are you up to? You didn't go back to work over at the shop today with them hands done up like that. The doctor wouldn't let you, and, if he had, he'd have seen to it you come in after work and got fresh dressings on 'em."

Johnny began to grin again. He shoved his hat back on his head and lighted a cigarette. "Sure, Sally, and when did I ever tell you I went back to work over at the shop today?"

"Johnny O'Connor"—Sally was wide-eyed in consternation—"you can't fool me, so don't you try to. You've been working some place today. What would they ever do over to the shop if they found out you was drawing compensation and then working some place else on the side?"

"Now, listen a minute and let me tell you, will you?" Johnny said. "In the first place, the compensation you get over to the shop is a laugh—you know that. You couldn't keep a canary bird alive on that. My hands are fine, and there isn't any reason I shouldn't be workin'. What they don't know over to that shop isn't gonna hurt 'em a damn bit. I know a guy that runs a little shop the other side o' town, and there isn't ever a time when he can't use an extra guy at the forge. He's a friend of mine and he'll keep his mouth shut, see?"

"Johnny," Sally said, "you're acting foolish. Honest, you are. Even if you don't get in trouble at the shop, suppose you get your hands infected or something. How can them blisters ever heal up if you've gone and got yourself another job at the forge in that awful heat? Johnny, it isn't right, and you know it."

Johnny took a hard drag on his cigarette.

"And another thing," she said. "Johnny, you have to go back over to the shop for that company doctor to dress your hands, and don't you think that he'll be able to tell by the looks of them that you're working around a forge again? If you was that hard up for some money, you coulda borrowed some, or you coulda got a drag on the money you'll make when you get back to work over at the shop."

Johnny smiled at her crookedly. "Just try to get a drag when you're off with an injury. Believe me, I did, I went the rounds over there the past couple days."

There was an edge of exasperation in Sally's voice that she was fighting to keep under control. "Why, my gosh, as far as money goes, if you had saved the money today that you must have handed out to—" She stopped short and bit her lip.

Johnny's face was tense and angry, and Sally looked at him out of the corners of her eyes apprehensively.

"Johnny, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying a thing against Gloria. My gosh, it isn't her I blame. You're the one, you dope. Gloria is a sweet baby and nobody could ever blame her for nothing. You're the one. Honest, Johnny, and I used to think that you were quite bright, too. Honest, of all the dumb things I ever heard of in my life, if you aren't—"

In a moment Johnny was relaxed and smiling again. "Aw, who's a dope?" he scoffed back at Sally. "Lady, mind what you're saying, there! Sally, my girl, you just keep your eye on Mrs. O'Connor's little boy Johnny. He'll do all right."

Sally measured pancake flour out of a small paper sack, using an old chipped cup without a handle, and dumped it into a big green mixing bowl.

The living-room door opened and closed noisily, and Joe Braun walked in, in his dress-up clothes and overcoat, white scarf with fringe on it, and an air of slightly alcoholic good humor about him to match the odor of whisky he brought into the room.

"WELL, hello there, Johnny. How's the boy?" he said with unusual joviality. "Hi, sis, how you doin'?"

"Well, stranger, if it isn't just about time you were showing up around here for a meal," Sally said good-naturedly. "Honestly, Johnny, what am I gonna do with this fellow? He pays me good money for board every single week, and then—"

"Oh, oh"—Johnny shaded his eyes the better to look at a large pasteboard box Joe was carrying under his arm—"oh, oh! Somebody's got a new suit! Well, what do you know about that? The best dressed guy on Horton Street already, and then he goes and buys himself another new suit!"

Joe looked down at the box as if just aware of it. "New suit, hell," he said. "I wish it was! Naw. That's a little present for my sister. Here you are, sis!"

He held it out to her, and Sally stared at him, bewildered. She cut the string and fumbled at the box with unsteady fingers. "Joe, if this isn't the nicest thing I ever heard of. It's so sweet of you. You shouldn't have spent all this money on me."

She lifted the cover. Johnny came closer to the table as Sally smoothed back the thin rustling paper. "Oh, Joe! Oh, it's beautiful!" She picked up the dress by the shoulders and held it up out of the box.

"Oh, Joe, it's the prettiest dress I ever had in all my life! Oh, I love it!" She lifted it out of the box carefully, holding the shoulders of it up to her own shoulders. And, as she lifted it, a little white card fell on the floor at Johnny O'Connor's feet. He had trouble scooping it up from the floor, but he got hold of it at last and held it out to Sally.

Holding the dress under her chin with one hand, she examined the card. It didn't take her more than a second to read what was written there, and then the smile was gone from her face and she turned red from her neck to the roots of her hair.

Just a few words on a card, written sprawling in very black ink: "For that date we have, remember?" and then the initial underneath, the one letter N, a tall, arrogant capital N that was somehow just as mocking and supercilious as Nicky Toresca's face.

Sally threw the card back into the box as if it had burned her fingers. She began to fold up the dress, and now her hands were shaking noticeably.

Joe Braun laughed again. "I told you you'd be surprised," he said.

Sally bit her lips, but she didn't even look at him. She was folding the dress again as quickly as she could with her clumsy, shaking hands.

Johnny O'Connor looked from one to the other alertly, with a puzzled look on his face. "Hey, what gives?"

"No, it's just a mistake, Johnny, that's all. It—it—the dress doesn't belong to me, that's all. I—I—" Sally's voice faded out, and she was trying to jam the cover back on the box and to keep from crying.

Joe was puzzled and he stared at Sally uneasily.

"O. K. If you got somethin' you wanta say to me, go ahead and say it. I ain't got all night."

"I got so much on my mind, I don't know where to start," Sally said softly, "nor I don't know how to say it."

Joe laughed unpleasantly.

"I'm worried about you, Joe."

"Well, thanks!"

"No; I mean it, Joe. Joe, how come you're hanging around with Nicky Toresca all the time lately?"

JOE began to scowl, and his voice, when he answered her, was uneven and angry. "Nicky's a friend of mine, and what's it to you?"

"A friend of yours!" Sally repeated. "That's just what worries me, Joe. You call Nicky Toresca a friend of yours. He isn't the right kind of a fellow for you to be friends with, Joe, and you know it. He's something—something altogether different from what you are, Joe. Can't you see that? He runs that night club, and he makes a lot of money, and they say he's crooked. You're not like he is, Joe. You work in a factory and you don't have a lot of money to throw around the way he does. You're younger than he is, and you work hard for a living."

Sally leaned across the table toward him and spoke to him earnestly. "Joe, try to understand what I said the way I meant it and please don't get sore. Maybe I didn't say it right. It's hard for me to say things I think out in words sometimes, but try to understand. You know yourself that Nicky Toresca isn't our kind of folks—that he isn't any good."

"Well, I don't know any such a damn thing!" Joe said, looking back at her defiantly. "I guess I know a fine guy when I come across one, and Nicky Toresca is it. He's done a lot for me. . ."

"Yes, he's certainly done a lot for you!" Sally said.

Joe's temper flared up instantly. "O. K., O. K., go ahead and pick on me. That's all anybody ever does around here, is pick on me. I get so sick of it, I can't hardly stand it. Nothing I ever do is right, everything that happens around this place I'm always to blame for. Well, I'm getting good and sick of it! I work my head off in that rattrap of a factory day after day, and what thanks do I ever git for it?"

"Joe!" Sally said. "I've never asked a thing of you. If that's the way you feel about it, why, you can quit your job over at the shop tomorrow and—"

"Yes, you bet I can!" Joe shouted. "You bet I can, and that's just what I'm gonna do, too."

"Joe, you get all worked up and talk like a ten-year-old kid! It's all right for you to say you'll quit your job. I wish I could say to you, 'All right, if you don't like factory work, you just quit and I'll keep you going until you find some other kind of a job.' But I can't do that, and you know it. Suppose you do quit your job over there tomorrow. What will you do then? Factory jobs are just about the only kind of work there is around this town. What would become of you? Just think about that for a minute."

Joe laughed in her face. "Oh, so you think a factory job is all I'm good for? Well, I'll show you. I'll step into another job tomorrow morning. You wait and see. Nicky Toresca will give me a job. He offered me a job any time I wanted one."

"Doing what, Joe? Do you think Nicky Toresca is gonna pay you to set around at a table in his place and drink up his liquor?"

"Hell, he hires a lot a' guys," Joe said. "He's got enough work for a lot a' guys—drive cars, run errands for him, and stuff like that—and he'll pay me good money. And if you think that ain't a hell of a lot better than workin' my head off in some stinkin' rattrap of a shop day in and day out, you're crazy!"

Sally was silenced, and Joe swaggered toward the kitchen door. "You got anything more you wanta say?" he sneered.

Sally slowly shook her head. "I don't see what there is for me to say now, Joe. You know how I feel about it; but if this is the way it is, why, I guess there isn't anything else I can say, is there?"

He stopped with his hand on the door, and she said, still without looking at him, "Seein' you're working for Nicky Toresca now, Joe, there's one little job you can do for him right away."

"Watcha mean?"

"This." Sally kicked at the edge of the dress box on the floor with her foot. "You better take this back to him."

DETERMINED to make Christmas a real celebration, Sally collected her pay check on Friday night and ransacked the stores for presents. Returning home, her arms piled high with packages, she stopped at the O'Connors'. Johnny opened the door instantly. "Well, I'll be damned," he said, grinning. "If here isn't Mrs. Santa Claus in person! I'll bet a lot of stores downtown went out of business tonight when you came home. Come on in, Sally, and set down before you fall down."

"Gee, doesn't that look pretty! Just look!" Sally cried as they walked into the room.

The table in the corner of the living room had been pulled away from the wall a little, and a small-sized Christmas tree was mounted on it, resplendent in shining silver icicles, glass balls, and colored bulbs.

Gloria dropped her magazine and stretched, her arms doubled above her shining head. "We put it up tonight after Johnny got home," she explained.

Johnny walked the length of the room to the cigarette stand and turned his back to them while he lighted a cigarette.

"Johnny says we have to hang up a stocking for Bev," Gloria said. "I think it's silly when she's so little, but Johnny says we have to."

"Why, sure you do," Sally said. "That's just part of Christmas when you got a baby." There was a pause in the conversation, broken at last by Sally.

"What'sa matter, Johnny, aren't you feeling good?" she asked him. "You look awful tired and your face is kind of flushed."

"You should talk about lookin' tired, Sally, my girl," Johnny scoffed, "and you so tired you can hardly sit up on that chair, and your face as white as a sheet."

"Well, I am tired," Sally admitted readily.

Johnny stopped still at Sally's startled voice, the match poised in front of his cigarette.

Sally had jumped out of her chair, dropping packages in all directions. "Johnny O'Connor, look at your hand!"

As she came close to him, Johnny waved the match out and drew away from her. "Now take it easy, Sally," he said plaintively. "It's just swelled up a little tonight, that's all."

"Swelled up a little!" Sally echoed. "Well, I guess it is! Johnny, let me see it, please."

He held his right hand out to her silently. It was huge and misshapen with swelling, the fingers covered with a clean bandage, wrapped loosely around them.

When she turned it over, she cried out again: "Oh, Johnny, look at your wrist, and way up your arm!" With quick trembling fingers she loosened his shirt cuff and pushed the sleeve back. The wrist was swollen too, and hot to the touch. Long livid streaks of red extended up his forearm. "Oh, gosh," Sally said, tracing the streaks of red with a gentle, trembling finger. "Oh, Johnny, I'll bet you've got infection in them burns. Here, take that bandage off and look. I never saw infection before, but I'm so afraid that—that—"

Johnny pulled his hand away from her and smiled ruefully. "You don't want to look at that hand, Sally; it don't look so good."

"Johnny," Sally said sharply, "honest, you know yourself that you shouldn't fool with anything like this. Infection is risky business—you know that. Johnny, you got to have a doctor!"

"Is it where he got burned?" Gloria said helplessly. "Unguentine stuff is awful good for burns. I got some in the bathroom. Should I—"

Sally whirled around to Johnny again. "Johnny, I'm going downstairs and call a doctor."

"Now, wait," Johnny said. "I've been soakin' my hands, but I got to have more time. The way they are now, the doctor is gonna take one look at my hands and know damn well I been working on a forge again."

"Johnny!" Sally took hold of his arm tight in both her hands. "You've fooled with that hand long enough—soaking it and cutting at it. You know better than that! Do you want to end by losing two or three fingers or your whole hand maybe?"

"O. K., O. K., so I go see the doctor tonight," Johnny mumbled.

"You better take a cab over there," Sally said. "You want me to call it for you right away?"

"There must be an angle to this somewhere that I'm missin'," Johnny said again, helplessly. "If I go over there, I'm gonna be in a hell of a spot!"

"Oh, gosh, Johnny," Sally said at last. "I don't know what to say. Maybe I'm telling you to do the wrong thing—I don't know. But the thing is, you've just got to get to a doctor."

Johnny shrugged his shoulders. "O. K.," he said. "So I go see the doctor. Give me a cigarette, will you?"

On Christmas Eve wet thick snow was still falling, softening the brightly colored lights. Lee was looking over Sally's shoulder behind her as they stood outside the restaurant. But suddenly she looked back at Sally again and spoke. "Why, hello, Mr. Toresca, Merry Christmas!" She looked at Sally and patted her arm lightly. "Well, good-by now; I gotta run for my bus. I'll be seein' yuh. Merry Christmas!"

"Good-by. Merry Christmas!" Sally answered.

"HELLO, Sally." It was Nicky Toresca's voice, all right, and his fluid ease of speech as he said those two words that Sally had come to know and hate. He stepped around from behind her then, and stood still in front of her. "The car is around the corner. Come on; I'll take you home."

"Well, thanks a lot, Mr. Toresca, but I'm not going home right now. I have some shopping to do first."

"O. K.," he said. "We'll go do that first."

"I have to get a Christmas tree. I'll get off the bus at the grocery right near my place."

"You don't want to go running around in this snow lugging no Christmas tree," he said. "We'll get your tree and I'll give you a ride home with it. There's a vacant lot over on Mills Street where they got a lot of trees for sale. We'll get one over there."

Sally didn't answer. She was thinking about Roy, and that he hadn't even written to her—not a Christmas card, not anything. This was the first Christmas Eve that they hadn't spent together since they had first known each other. She felt an aching in her even through the numbed lifelessness. How terrible Roy must be feeling tonight, sitting alone down there with the snow beating at the windows. How terribly lonely he must feel—how miserable, how hopeless! How terribly easy it was for people to take happiness for granted, when in just a few short months two people's happy life could turn into such misery. What was the use? Oh, what was the use!

Sally felt a little stirring inside of her as they walked through the yard filled with trees. "Mr. Toresca," she

(Continued on page 45)

PATRIOTS
WITHOUT
UNIFORM

BINOCULARS FOR THE ARMED FORCES

BY FLORENCE LOWE

For the army, too! A sergeant and a private receive a pair from the author.

THE Atlantic was a churning gray flood off the Virginia coast. Overhead the sun was a golden disk in a misty blue sky. In the rolling, pitching surface a bulky mud-gray tanker bounced along on the fringe of a long convoy. A sharp wind took a tatter of thin smoke from its single stack.

For more than an hour the men on the tanker had been watching a white sail bobbing along the horizon. They were still watching it when a torpedo trailed a long straight streak of foam across the water and crashed into the tanker's side.

There was a terrific blast, and black smoke rolled from the stricken craft. Most of the men had time only to jump into the sea before the tanker went down.

When the dripping survivors had been hauled aboard other convoy vessels, the white sail was gone. Escorting warcraft wheeled around and converged on the scene, but found no trace of the undersea raider.

The loss of the tanker and thousands of gallons of desperately needed oil was reported last summer. A friend of mine who was aboard gave me the details when he reached shore. The sail, he told me, was a disguised periscope. The tanker, he declared, would have been saved had there been a pair of binoculars aboard.

Whereupon I lent him my glasses —and began to think of finding other pairs to give men in the services. Out of that came my drive—Binoculars for the Armed Forces.

I went to Clara Bell Walsh—a well known New Yorker—for help, and she was enthusiastic. We contacted our friends by phone calls and telegrams, but they were still more interested in using their glasses at the race track than in sending them to war.

After our first discouraging month —in which we collected exactly two pairs of binoculars—Mrs. Walsh decided we needed some publicity. She called a newspaperman and he wrote a piece for us. The results were startling. Fifty pairs came in the first day, of which forty-four were suitable for war. Two more newspaper stories brought in another stream of glasses, and we got 100 pairs over the Christmas holidays. Various products which sponsor radio programs relinquished a few minutes of their time so that our campaign could be announced over the air, and the donations began to come in steadily.

To date, we have received more than 300 pairs of binoculars suitable for use by the armed forces, and have assigned them, on loan, to the units most in need of them.

Among the glasses was one periscope type, worth more than $1,000 and donated by William Dublier, the inventor. Some one else contributed a pair used by President Roosevelt in the first World War when he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The value of the entire collection is more than $10,000.

Mrs. Walsh and I are proud of the many letters of thanks we have received from army and navy officers and from the boys to whom we have sent glasses. Typical of them is this extract from a letter from Major J. E. Willey, Marine Headquarters, Washington:

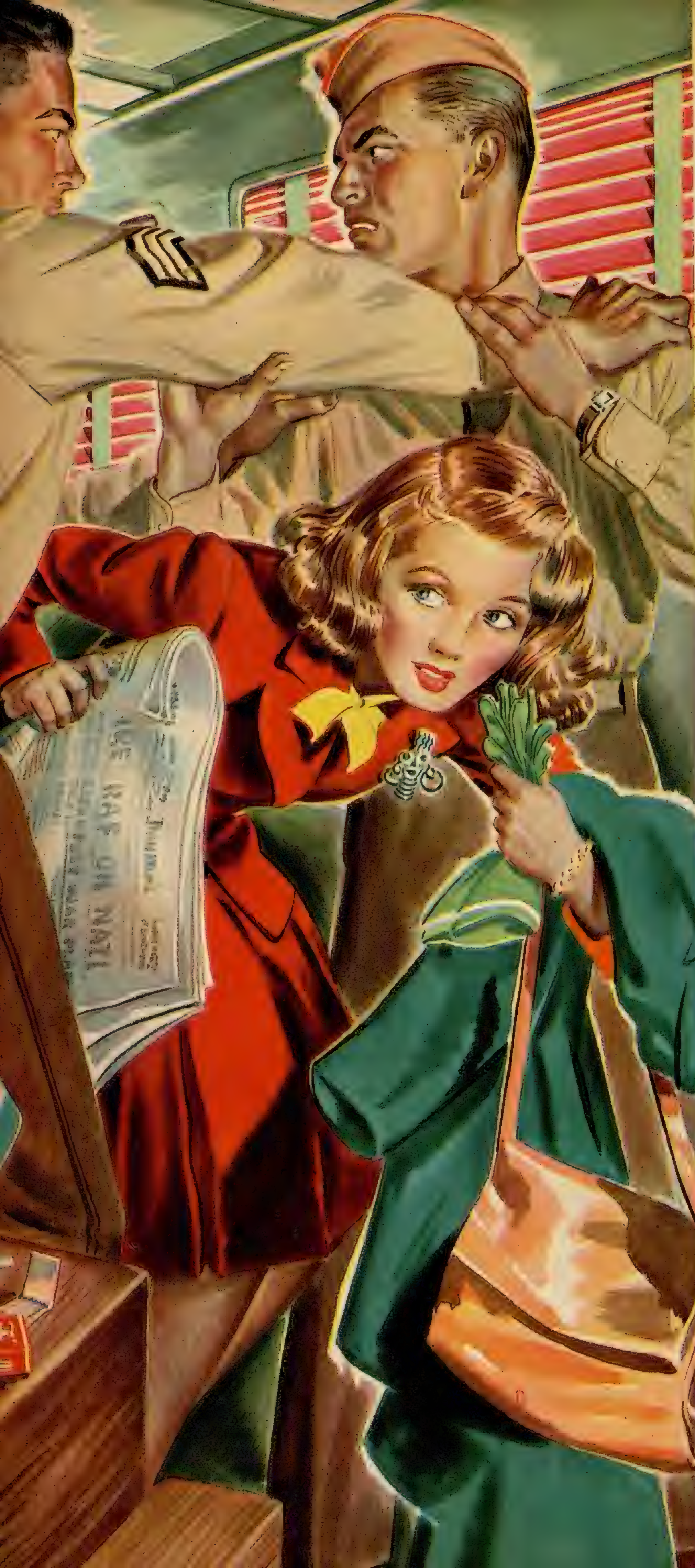
"It is through such fine examples of the promotion as demonstrated by the Committee of Binoculars for the Armed Forces that one realizes the important role played by the home front in the prosecution of the war."

When Mrs. Walsh and I first started out, we planned to collect glasses for the marines alone. But after a visit to naval headquarters in New York we extended it to the entire navy, and after I heard a radio appeal for glasses by Major Donald M. Liddell at Fort Totten, we decided to include the army too.

An amusing episode marked our delivery of a batch of binoculars to the army. A sergeant and a private rolled up to the front door of New York's sedate Hotel Plaza in a jeep. The undismayed doorman walked right over, just as if it were Mrs. Astor's town car, and tried to open the door. Then every one laughed. Jeeps have no doors.

Although we reached the 200 mark some time ago, the need for binoculars still exists, and glasses in good condition, of six power and greater, are more than welcome. Some people think we have a large committee. We haven't. The other day a man asked me for the names of the members. He seemed surprised when I told him, "Just Clara Bell and me. She carries the sword and I carry the typewriter."

THE END



HAVEN'T WE

BILL steadied himself and stepped into the lounge car. He straightened his shoulders to ease the tightness across the back of his uniform and headed for an empty chair. The train screeched around a curve, and he winced.

He lit a cigarette and watched the steward swing expertly down the aisle with a bottle of soda and some ice for the corporal sitting across the way.

Bill relaxed a little, leaning his weight on his left shoulder, so there would be no pressure on his right side. He listened to the voices, and watched the corporal take a swig from a flat bottle and wash it down with a swallow of soda. The corporal caught his eye and smirked.

"Hi, buddy!" The corporal's voice was very loud. "Want a drink?" He waved his bottle invitingly.

Bill shook his head. For some reason, he resented the "buddy."

The door from the Pullman end of the car opened, and Bill saw the corporal's face light up. He turned and looked. A girl came in. She had no hat on, and her brown hair fell, loose and easy, to her shoulders. She was tall and stood very straight, and Bill felt there was a kind of tension about her.

She was looking at him and something like a smile started on her lips, and Bill almost jumped to his feet and said, "Hello." Then the beginning smile faded, and Bill decided she'd almost made the same mistake he had. He had been sure he'd seen her before. Now he wasn't sure.

She sat down one chair away from him, and Bill wanted to move over next to her, to talk to her. Maybe her voice would bring back where he'd seen her or who she reminded him of. He tried to think of something to say to her, something that would be friendly and inoffensive; but the only thing that came into his head was, "Haven't we met before?" and it sounded corny.

Suddenly he felt shy and self-conscious. He forced his eyes straight

Bill was on his feet. He gripped the corporal's shoulder. "Now beat it!" he said furiously.

MET BEFORE?

The corporal thought she was an easy pick-up
—but his smooth story got rough treatment

Liberty's Short Short BY MADELINE THOMPSON

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES BRYSON

ahead, and the only thing to look at was the corporal. Bill eyed him a moment, and then he wondered how any one could leer like that without moving a muscle in his face. It was in his eyes, Bill decided. The corporal's slightly bleary eyes were narrowed and speculative, roving deliberately from the girl's trim smart shoes to her face and then back to her legs again.

The girl lit a cigarette and pretended not to notice. She picked up a newspaper and started to read it. The corporal slipped the flat bottle into his back pocket, tugged at his tie, and uncrossed his legs. He's going to try it, Bill thought—and he was a little surprised at how much the idea annoyed him.

"Say," the corporal said, swaying unsteadily over the girl, "didn't I see you some place before?"

Bill flinched. It sounded even more phony than he had thought it would.

The girl looked up. She really studied the corporal's face before answering. "No," she said.

She went back to her newspaper and Bill felt good inside. But the corporal wasn't giving up. He sat down on the chair between the girl and Bill.

"O. K.," he said, "maybe I made a mistake. Can I buy you a drink anyway?" His voice was smooth, almost intimate.

The girl lowered her paper. Over the corporal's shoulder Bill caught the cool, dismissing look in her eyes. "No, thank you," she said.

SO suddenly that Bill knew it was an act, the corporal slumped back in the chair and looked sad. It was so obvious and hammy that Bill felt his own face flushing with embarrassment.

"Don't think I'm being fresh," the corporal said plaintively. "It's—well—I'm just lonesome, that's all."

Bill's embarrassment changed to resentment. The girl looked at the corporal, and Bill thought hopefully that he detected disbelief in her eyes. He waited eagerly for the squelch. When the girl spoke, he was disappointed.

"I'm sorry," she said, her voice sounding tired and resigned. "I didn't mean to be abrupt."

The corporal beamed and leaned toward her. "Aw, that's all right," he said magnanimously. "I know how it is for girls these days. There are bums in the army that think they can get by with anything just 'cause they're wearin' a uniform." Bill thought of his buddies and he wanted to hit him. He glanced at the girl. Her face was impassive. "I guess guys like me—you know, guys who've been in it, seen the real thing—we get a diff'rent outlook. You don't know what it means"—he shook his head sadly—"after bein' out there duckin' shells, to get a chance to just talk to a nice girl like you."

The girl nodded, and Bill groaned inwardly at the note of sympathy in her voice.

"Where have you been?" she asked.

"Well, I guess it's no military secret any more," the corporal said importantly. "My outfit was on Bataan. And let me tell you"—he dropped his voice to just the right dramatic pitch—"when you're sittin' in a fox hole, fightin' for days with hardly no sleep and hell on all sides, believe me, it makes you think about things. People don't know what us guys went through for 'em."

"I have an idea it was pretty tough," she said simply.

The corporal leaned closer to her, and Bill found himself gripping the arms of his chair. The description of the fighting, the build-up, the terrific job the corporal was attributing to himself made Bill sick with shame and disgust.

"I thought," the girl interrupted finally, her voice so low Bill could hardly hear it, "that every one on Bataan was killed or captured."

"Yeah." The corporal nodded dejectedly. "Most of my pals got it. I wanted to stick with 'em," he said, "but they evacuated me after I got nicked in the leg. They shipped me over to Corregidor. I sure hated to go." He dropped his voice mournfully.

The girl stared at the corporal for a long time. Her face was suddenly no longer beautiful, but filled with a strange hardness and tension. Bill had seen that look on many faces. She leaned forward stiffly and her voice was harsh.

"Corporal, you're a damned liar!"

The corporal drew back. He made a feeble attempt to recover. "Say, listen," he said weakly. "They don't tell you everything, you know, in the papers."

"They can't," the girl said. Her eyes were cold but blazing. She tapped the insignia on the corporal's sleeve. "Your outfit was never near Bataan or Corregidor."

"Is that so!" the corporal said. "And how the hell would you know?"

BILL was on his feet. He remembered now. He remembered the lurching truck, the whining planes, the million pains in his side, the last nightmare moment before oblivion, filled with the pale face of a girl, her head thrown back, her eyes blazing with cold hatred.

"Because—" the girl began.

Bill gripped the corporal's collar. "Because," he said furiously, "she was at Corregidor. Now beat it!"

The corporal swallowed hard and the red began creeping over his face. He wrenched himself free from Bill and retreated hastily toward the coach. Bill turned to the girl.

She smiled up at him. "Thanks," she said. "Won't you sit down, sergeant?" She was beautiful again.

Bill sat down next to her. He could feel himself blushing.

"I—I thought we'd met before," he explained. "But you look different out of uniform."

"I wasn't sure, either. There were so many of you—" She extended her hand. "My name is Joan Lawson," she said simply.

"Bill Borden," he smiled, taking her hand. "Can I buy you a drink?"

"I'd like that," Joan Lawson said.

After the drinks came, the tension left them and they began to talk easily about the only things it was still possible to talk about—like each other, and what they liked, and tomorrow.

THE END

IT'S TIME TO SAY GOOD-BY

Tessa learns that Washington is a man's world where wives are not wanted. For Johnny, adventure lies ahead, but can Tessa be satisfied with memories?

BY ISABEL MOORE

ILLUSTRATED BY O. F. SCHMIDT

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

JOHNNY BARNES—his wife Tessa discovered to her amazement—really wanted to leave her and their two children and their lovely suburban home and get into the war. When a chance came for a commission in the army as an aerial photographer, he jumped at it. Tessa wondered if her friend Jill Marshall was right when she claimed that "A lot of men are going to this war as an escape, because they're fed up to the teeth with their wives and their jobs and their lives."

Johnny *was* fed up, he confessed to himself. For a year he had been restless, unsatisfied. He loved Tessa, he supposed, but she wasn't exciting, as Catherine Lockhart was. Catherine, a writer, wife of wealthy Carlson Lockhart, had just discovered Johnny's charm. Accustomed to taking what she wanted from life, she made up her mind, before he left for Washington, that she would try to see more of him.

After Johnny left, Tessa was lonely and sorry for herself. She found it hard to keep her household going on an army captain's pay, yet she was determined she would *not* do as Johnny wanted her to—get rid of her house and live with Johnny's mother and sister in another part of town. Mrs. Barnes senior was a domineering woman who disapproved of many of Tessa's friends—particularly of George Worth, an old beau of Tessa's who was in the Navy Air Force and who was now home on leave. Tessa didn't care about George, but his interest in her was flattering and she liked seeing him occasionally.

Lonely and unhappy as she was, she cried with joy when Sherwood Coates, Johnny's sister's husband who was going to England, told her she could have his apartment in Washington if she liked. She telephoned Johnny at once and suggested that she move down. But he seemed reluctant to have her.

"Washington's no place for kids," he said. "Besides, I don't know how long I'll be here. It'd be a crazy stunt, Tessa."

His attitude worried her. And all at once she decided to waste no more time with doubts and suspicions. She would go to Washington and talk to him.

IN the end, when it no longer mattered to either of them—when the mistakes of the past were irrevocable and therefore no longer confusing—Tessa could look back clearly on that trip of hers to Washington and know how foolish she had been to go down there. Again and again she was to think that if only she had had a little more courage—about life and about the war and about herself in relationship to those things—everything might have been all right. But frightened and bewildered, beyond her depth in the swiftly deepening stream of life, she had fled to Johnny, turning to him as she had always turned to him, and Johnny had looked at her strangely and had said:

"Why don't you grow up?"

At the time, she didn't understand him, quite. Because even then, two months after they had been separated, he had begun to talk a different language. He had begun to see himself in relationship to the world, instead of viewing the world only in relationship to himself; and Tessa, isolated in her weakness and in her selfishness, hadn't yet grown tall enough to look beyond the rim of her own small world.

As she sat there in Johnny's hotel room and watched the pale March sunlight shifting and waning as it poked its way through the slats in the soiled Venetian blinds, it seemed to Tessa that she could not bear ever to return to Linton Heights and the strange, lonely, abnormal life she had known there since Johnny had left her.

Johnny would have to figure out something. He would have to find some way to help her. There was Sherwood's generously offered apartment, and Washington was not the end of the world or a battle front. There was no reason why she couldn't come down here. He just didn't want her, Tessa's rebellious thoughts decided. He was glad to escape from the noise of the children and the monotony of marriage. But that was selfish and unfair.

Sunlight crept away and hugged the corners of the narrow ugly hotel room as afternoon deepened into twilight. Tessa sat alone and small in the big chair beside the window, her legs tucked under her, little-girl fashion, her head tipped back, her eyes half closed. This was Saturday and she had thought Johnny would be home early. He probably stopped by at the Officers' Club for a cocktail, she thought, envying him his freedom and the gay life she pictured him living down here. The leather-encased clock on the small table beside Johnny's bed told her it was half past five. Once or twice the phone rang and male voices at the other end were startled and confused to find a woman's voice answering Johnny's phone.

Tessa felt a little queer about it, too. She felt like an intruder. Even the clerk at the desk downstairs had looked at her oddly, had given her the key to Johnny's room with utmost reluctance, and had left Tessa with the distinct impression that he did not believe that the pretty young girl in the lynx jacket was Captain Barnes' wife!

"You ought to let Johnny know you're coming down," Catherine Lockhart had advised her. "Men don't enjoy surprises as a rule."

"Nonsense!" Tessa had said impatiently. "Besides, if I tell him, he'll think up a dozen reasons why I shouldn't come. And I'm sure I can talk him into taking Sherwood's apartment if I just can see him—"

And so she had come, leaving the children with Johnny's mother, and Catherine had come down with her, which made the trip much pleasanter. "I'm doing a Washington career-girl story," Catherine had explained, "and it won't do me any harm to sit around Washington for a few days and sop up atmosphere. Besides, I always like to go places. 'Anywhere but here' is my motto."

Catherine was staying at the suite in the Mayflower that was always at Carlson Lockhart's disposal. Tessa could picture her as she would be now, stretched out in a warm tub, with half a dozen people to wait on her, and flowers arriving from Carlson and an exquisite dress to step into for the cocktail hour. It didn't seem fair that some people could go through this war not giving up a thing, while others, like herself, had to give up everything.

The hands of the clock slipped around to six, and the sunlight disappeared entirely, leaving the room

(Continued on page 60)

Her laughter was loud and frequent as she talked with George, and Johnny frowned toward her warningly.

1 Only structurally sound used tires can be recapped. The old tire is inspected for defects in its side walls. The time to recap is when treads are worn smooth.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TIRE RECAPPING

FEW motorists realize that a properly recapped tire may be almost as good as a new tire—up to 80 per cent as good so far as mileage is concerned. Now that permits or priorities are no longer required for tire recapping, America's automobile owners have what amounts to a New Deal. It may not be a Square Deal, unless they're aware of certain facts about recapping.

The time to recap is when the tire tread is worn smooth. If it is worn down to, or into, the fabric, recapping may be a waste of money. And if the side walls are cracked, or if there are large cuts, tears, and holes in the fabric, the recapped tire may collapse at any time. Minor defects in fabric and cord may, of course, be repaired—without affecting the tire's durability.

Since the worth of a recap depends largely upon the original condition of the used tire, a motorist should insist upon an honest tire inspection and patronize only those shops he knows. A reliable recap man will tell a customer frankly whether a tire is worth recapping.

Prices range from $3.95 for recapping a small tire to $9.50 for one of the largest sizes. The ceiling price on a 600-by-16 (average size) tire is $6.50.

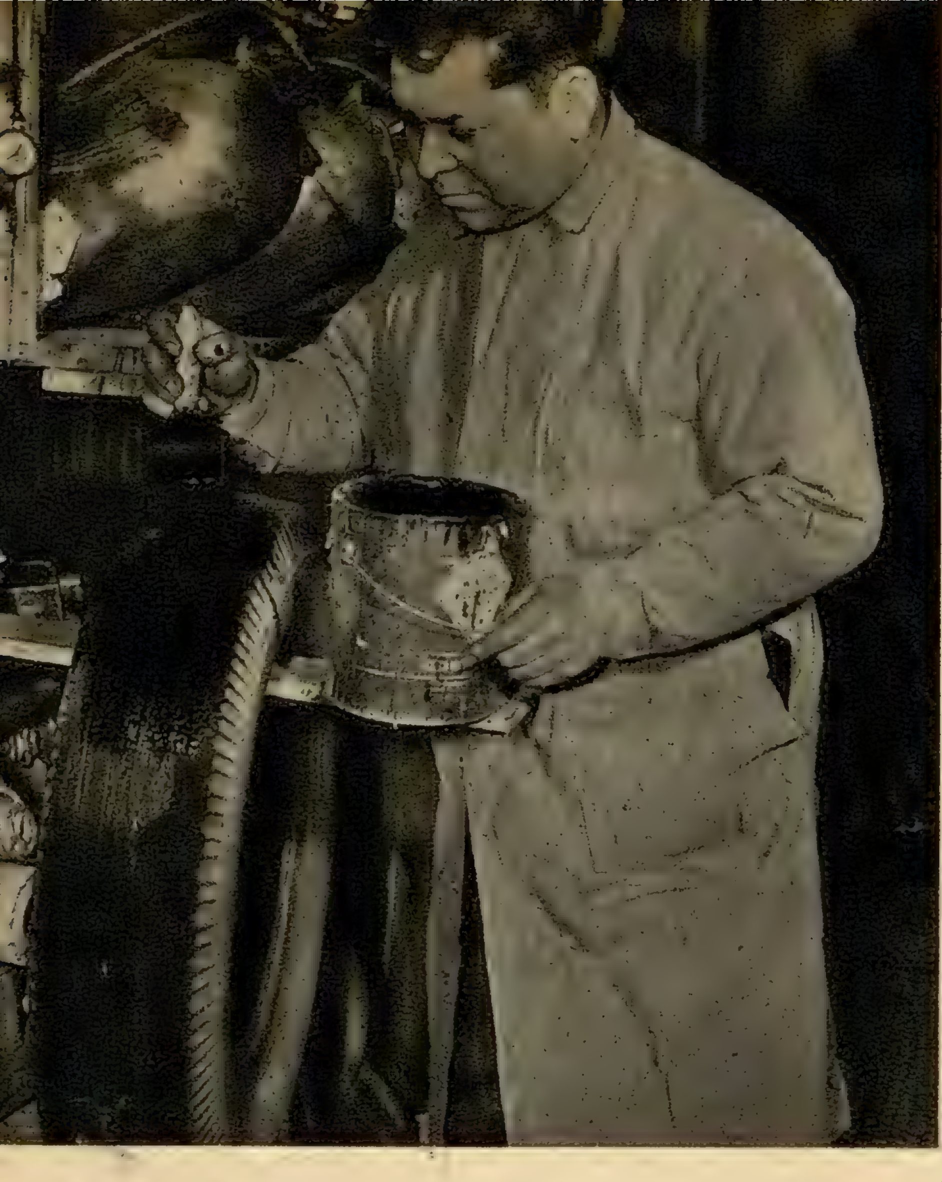
Once you have obtained your recapped tires, be doubly cautious in your care of them. Drive slowly. Avoid sudden stops and wild turns. See that proper air pressure is maintained in all tires. Be sure brakes are correctly adjusted and your wheels are in alignment.

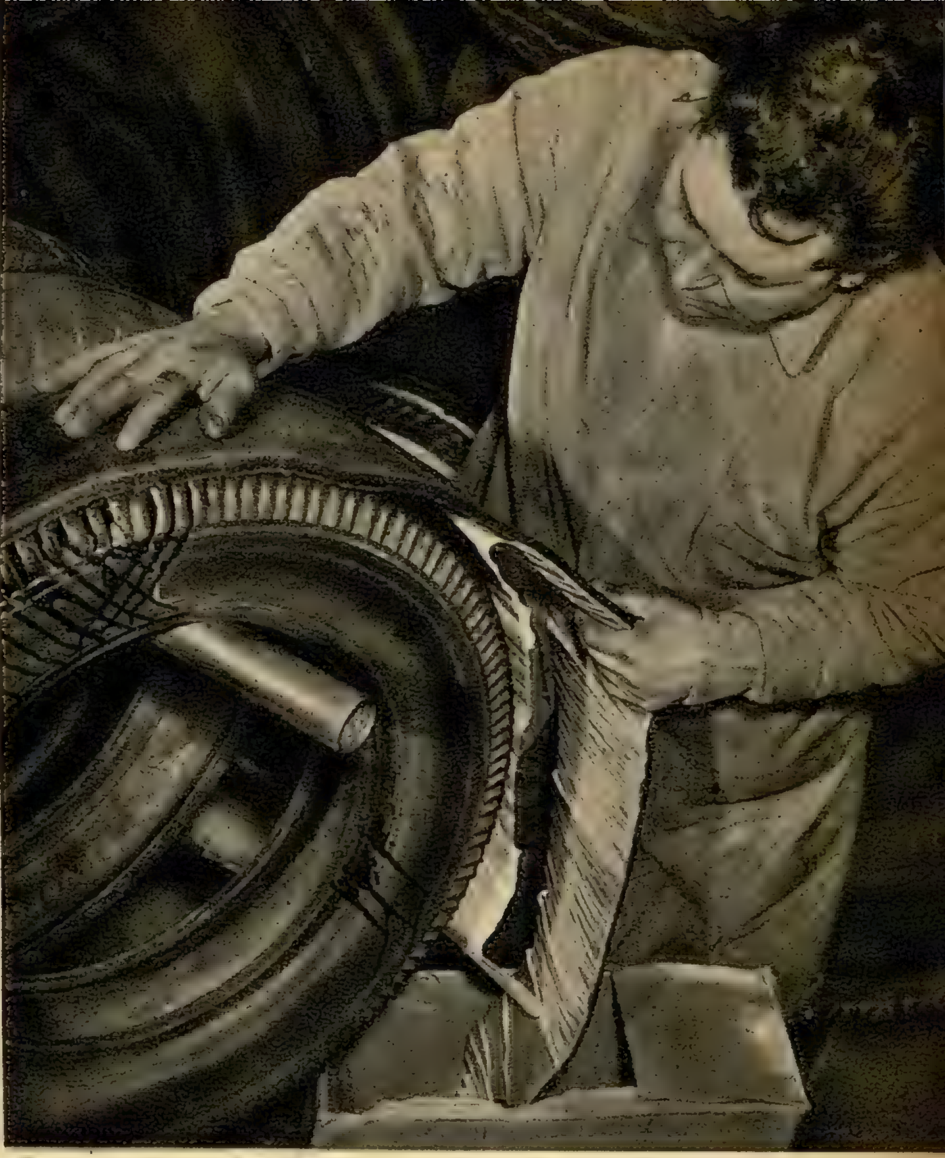
A word of advice: Recap stations are behind in their orders. Take one tire at a time to be recapped—using the spare in its place. If you have no spare, rent one.

Proper recapping and prudent tire care will keep America rolling until the new synthetic tires arrive.

THE END

2 The tire is given the "buffing" treatment. An abrasive wheel roughens the old tread, providing a surface to which the "camelback," or new rubber surface, will stick.





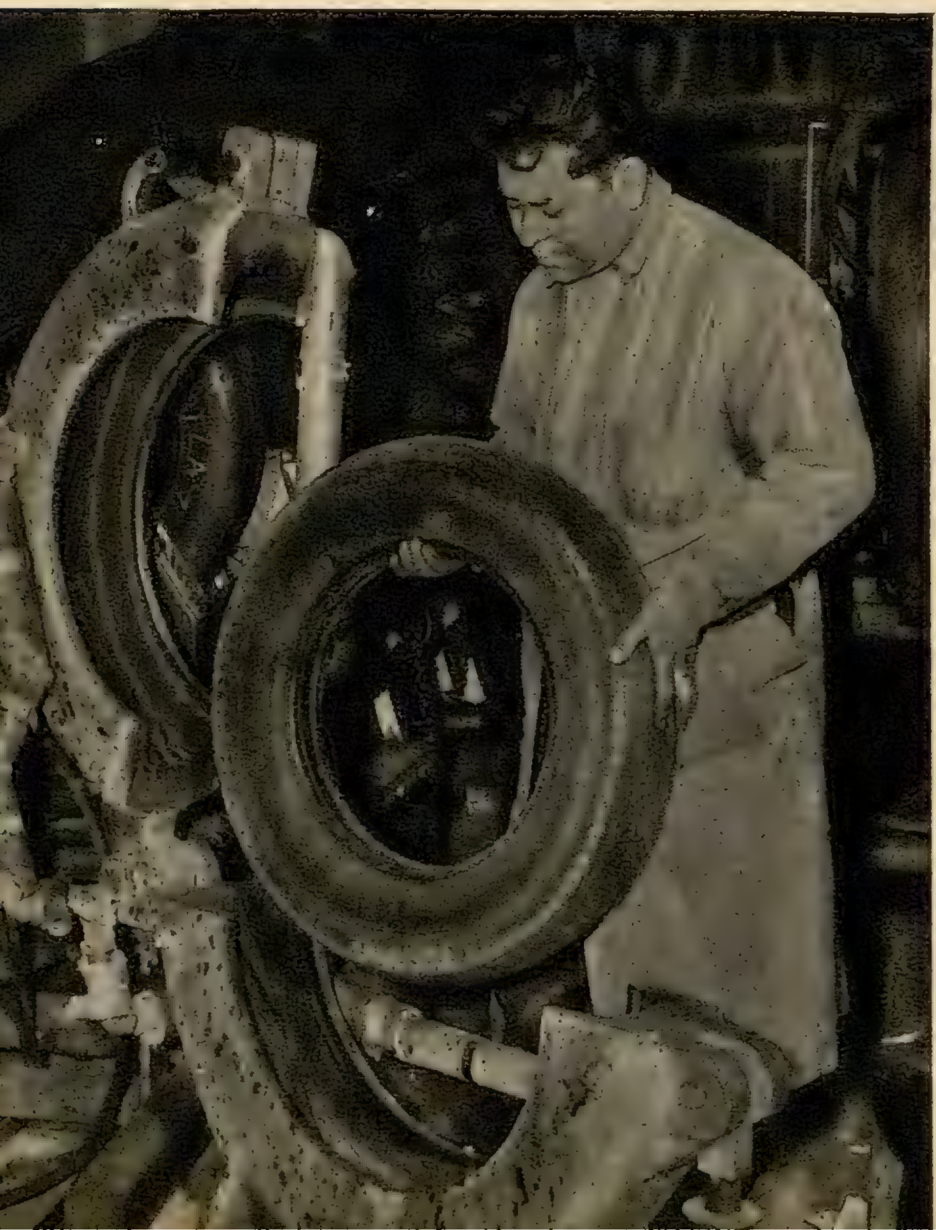
ACME PHOTOS

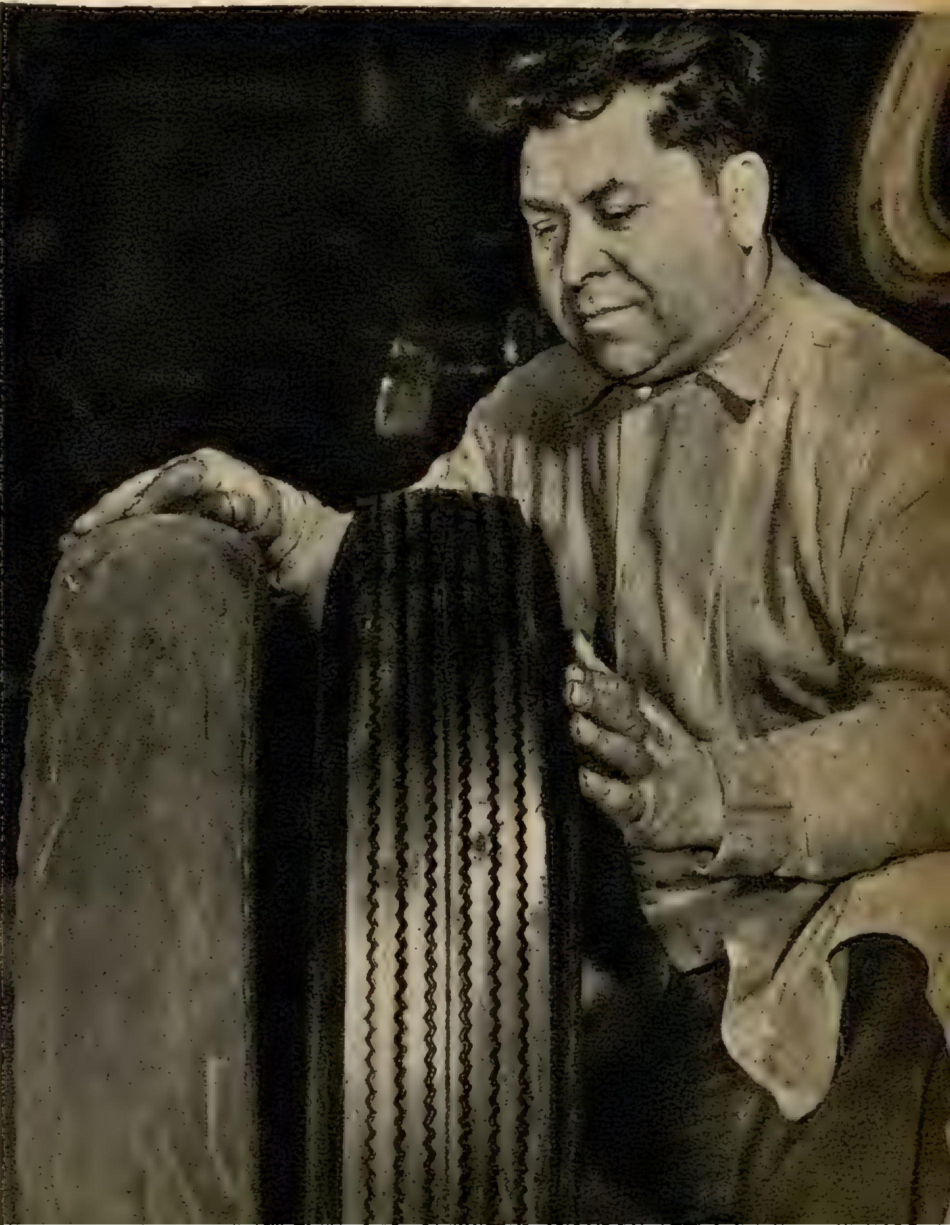
3 Two coats of rubber cement are applied to the roughed-up surface of the old tire. Before this is done, however, all stones, nails, and other foreign matter are removed.

4 The "camelback" is wrapped around the old tread—and held in place by the cement. The new surface is a rubber compound—part reclaim and part crude rubber.

5 The tire is now ready for the capping mold, which uses heat and pressure to weld the "camelback" and tire carcass together. At the same time it bakes a tread on it.

6 One tire is ready for recapping and the other has just been recapped. Rubber experts claim that properly recapped tires will give up to 80 per cent of new-tire mileage.



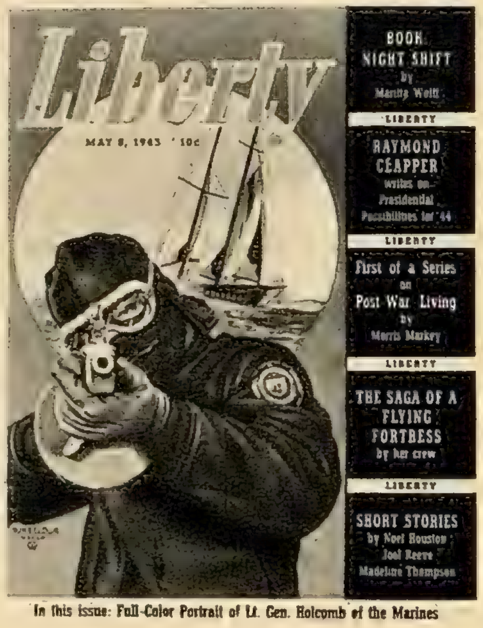


STORMPROOF FLEET

The Coast Guard's Corsairs call their work "yachting at government expense"—but other seamen say these sailingest sub hunters are plumb crazy

BY ALAN WAXMAN

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Liberty's cover for this issue shows a Coast Guard Corsair attired in his "goon suit," the gear that sees him through many a stormy North Atlantic night. For a word-picture of that little-known but highly exciting branch of the service, we refer you to the article below.]


Liberty
MAY 8, 1943 10c
BOOK NIGHT SHIFT by Maritta Wolff
LIBERTY
RAYMOND CLAPPER writes on Presidential Possibilities for '44
LIBERTY
First of a Series on Post War Living by Morris Markey
LIBERTY
THE SAGA OF A FLYING FORTRESS by her crew
LIBERTY
SHORT STORIES by Noel Houston Joel Reeve Madeline Thompson
In this issue: Full-Color Portrait of Lt. Gen. Holcomb of the Marines

THE driving rain had changed to sleet that knifed hissingly into ever mounting seas. Wind, blasting down from the north-northwest, slammed violently against the drab gray hull as the Diesel-engined craft headed toward the harbor. The North Atlantic is not kind to boats.

Two sailors popped out of a companionway.

"Holy haddock! Look!" said one of them as he pointed over the stern toward the open sea.

"The damn fools," the other muttered. "It's those Corsairs."

A short distance astern, and heading on a northeasterly course that would take her along the coast, a two-masted schooner scudded. She was held over so far that a good section of her bottom showed.

Large white letters and numbers on her bow identified her as one of the schooners of the Coast Guard's Corsair fleet—a fleet composed of fishing and pleasure schooners enlisted for the duration to hunt submarines. And subs they hunt, come fair weather or foul. Because the officers and men of the Corsair fleet are the sailingest seagoers ever produced.

Their glee knows no bounds when they come swaggering ashore after a task patrol to hear some "spit-kit sailor" (Corsair for sailors who operate power-driven boats) say, "Gosh, wasn't that some storm?"

The answer usually is, "What storm? We've just been yachting at the expense of the government."

During the height of the Nazi sub menace on our shores the Corsair fleet was formed by the Coast Guard.

The average Corsair schooner is from 50 to 100 feet in length and carries about nine men as crew, with a chief bo's'n's mate as her skipper. In the crews are members of swank and exclusive yacht clubs who used to do the Bermuda races each year. Among their crews also are hard-handed and clear-eyed fishermen. But all have that love for a craft—any craft—footing along full and by under a good set of canvas, with the lee rail under a straight wake astern.

Dressed in "goon suits"—their foul-weather gear—aiming a blinker gun at some distant vessel, the Corsairs could easily pass for visitors from Mars in a belligerent mood.

Naturally any tale of their successes in their tasks are taboo under the present navy policy of silence about enemy sub sinkings. But after the war—ah, after the war!—then tall tales will be told.

The youngest Corsair skipper is chief bo's'n's mate Ronald Green, twenty-four, of Lubec, Maine, who has sailed nearly all of his young life as a fisherman, and who now is the idol of his crew of nine. The other eight members of the crew tower over their diminutive "Skippy," who gives orders in a quiet, well modulated voice. And they're obeyed as though the crew had been prodded with a sharpened boat hook.

The oldest of the Corsair skippers is a seventy-five-year-young ex-fisherman, who now teaches the tricks of smart sail handling to Corsair cubs at a Coast Guard school.

In between are ex-musicians, ex-newspaper photographers, ex-artists, and a score of other ex-professions and jobs. But they're all Corsairs now. And if some day, when you happen to be in a coastal town, you see a group of young men rolling downstreet with that gait that comes only after a tough trip under sail, you'll know they're Corsairs.

THE END

LIEUTENANT GENERAL THOMAS HOLCOMB, U. S. M. C.

Third in a Series of Paintings of Leaders of Our Fighting Forces by McCLELLAND BARCLAY

WHEN Thomas Holcomb was ordered to Marine Corps Headquarters in 1936 to become the major general commandant, he was advanced over several men who were his seniors. In marine history this type of promotion has usually caused explosions, but there were none then. Even those who themselves would have liked the honor knew that Holcomb was the right man for the job.

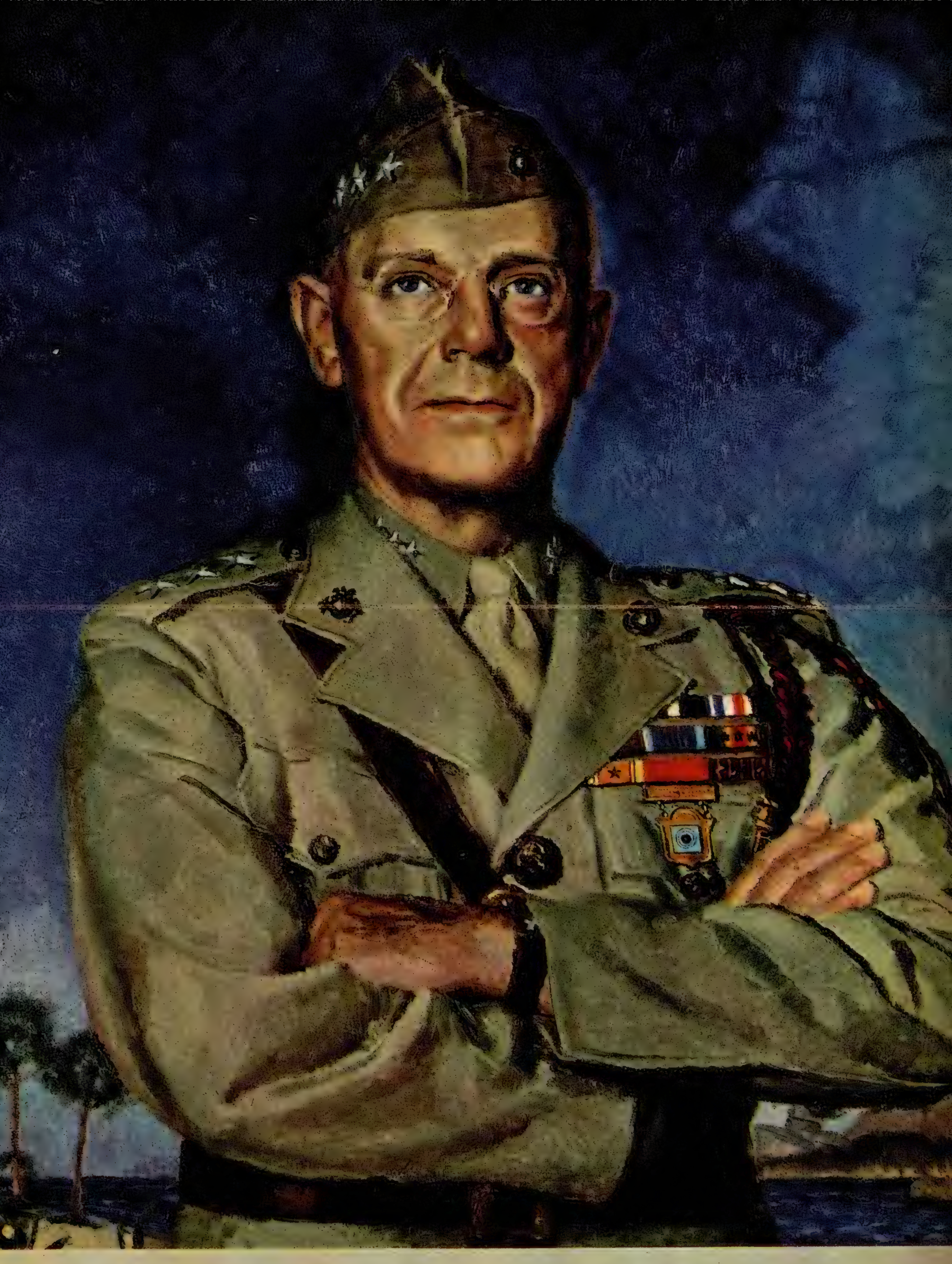
Born in New Castle, Delaware, in 1879, Holcomb was appointed to the Marine Corps in 1900, from civilian life, as a second lieutenant. An enthusiastic rifle shot, he led the first marine team that ever took part in a national rifle shooting match and was instrumental in making the marines the crack riflemen of America.

He had seen service in the United States, the Philippines, and China when the first World War broke out. He went to France with one of the early detachments of marines from the United States and came back one of the war's most decorated heroes. He wears the Navy Cross, the Cross of the French Legion of Honor, the Croix de Guerre with three palms, the Purple Heart, and the Silver Star with three oak-leaf clusters.

Between 1918 and 1935 he was graduated from the Command and General Staff School, the Navy War College, and the Army War College, and attained the rank of brigadier general. Then came his appointment as the major general commandant, reappointment in 1941, and later his advancement to lieutenant general.

General Holcomb does not look the part of the traditional hard-boiled fire-eating leatherneck. Those who have met him describe him as a "genial, kindly eyed, pipe-smoking man, slightly rotund, informal, and friendly." But according to a fellow general, he is "all marine," and is acknowledged as the Corps' most modern and up-to-date leader.

Next Week: Admiral Chester W. Nimitz



LIEUTENANT GENERAL THOMAS HOLCOMB, U.S.M.C.

Painted by McClelland Barclay

PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITIES FOR '44

Continued from Page 13

Roosevelt-chosen successor. Mr. Farley himself is reported to have ambitions, as he openly had them in 1940. An attractive figure, widely loved, Jim lacks the depth and breadth for the times. He is more than a mere politician. Yet he has failed to show that he has the caliber of statesmanship called for in these times, although of course similar limitations have not always stood in the way of others.

I don't think any one can take the nomination away from Mr. Roosevelt if he wants to go after it. And I doubt that Mr. Roosevelt will retire, provided he feels able to carry the burden a while longer. There is growing recognition of the logic that if he remains in shape physically, he will be the best one to finish the war and initiate the peace. Some are clamoring for the President to declare his intentions now. In normal times that might be very desirable. I think it is too early to expect now a decision about a nomination that would be made a year from June.

THE President's first choice, if he felt free and able to name a successor, undoubtedly would be Vice-President Wallace. He has indicated this in many ways. He has given Mr. Wallace important assignments in the war program. Mr. Wallace is far more than the figurehead that most Vice-Presidents become. But the choice of Mr. Wallace would not be unopposed even in innermost New Deal circles.

Paul McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission, is not to be brushed aside if there is to be a new Democratic ticket. He built an effective organization in 1940, with wide support in the American Legion and among schoolteachers. His popularity among convention delegates in 1940 was demonstrated when a stampede in the convention tried to prevent him from withdrawing his name as a candidate for the Vice-Presidential nomination. However, his manpower task is a hard one that may cost him all of his past popularity.

Another possible New Deal figure is Associate Justice William O. Douglas. But not much can happen unless he is taken off the Supreme Court and given a more active assignment. He has many warm supporters, but his lack of experience in politics and the fact that he has never held elective office handicap them.

Democratic conservatives have no available figures of national stature aside from James A. Farley. The nearest possibilities are Senators Byrd of Virginia and Tydings of Maryland. The conservatives may try to pick up a middle-of-the-road type. If James F. Byrnes survives his job as director of stabilization without making too many enemies, he might be advanced.

But Mr. Roosevelt will probably never abdicate to the conservative Democrats. His retreats are always slight—and strategic. In bringing Mr. Byrnes, a popular senator before he went to the Supreme Court, into the administration, Mr. Roosevelt was obviously making a gesture toward conservative elements in Congress. A similar motive may have dictated his appointment of Prentiss Brown to replace Leon Henderson as price administrator. Mr. Brown was a defeated Democratic senator from Michigan who had many contacts in Congress and was widely liked. Mr. Roosevelt often trims sail in face of danger. It does not indicate real retreat, but rather an ability to roll with the punch.

Generally speaking, it does not seem possible that the Democrats could win in 1944 with a conservative candidate. There are few conservatives of any national reputation and following among Democrats. If the past is any guide, it would be futile for the Democratic Party to go conservative. If a reaction is running toward Republicans, the tendency of the voters would be to elect a known conservative from the tried and true conservative party, instead of electing a Democratic conservative. That was demonstrated in 1924 when Democrats went into Wall Street and nominated John W. Davis out of the House of Morgan.

IN the Republican Party, the controversy over Wendell Willkie is the central question. Primarily the controversy relates to a readjustment of the party's attitude toward foreign policy. There is a strong strain of isolationism in the Republican Party. It still is very much alive under the surface.

Mr. Willkie is the challenging personality in the Republican Party, the figure to be reckoned with. He made an excellent race against President Roosevelt in 1940, considering all of the circumstances. Yet regular party leaders have a strong distaste for him, which expresses itself privately in sharp language. But they are afraid of him. He still seems to have a large residue of popular support, brought over from the tremendous vote in 1940. He stands out for his color, his originality, his courage, his willingness to take a position that he feels is for the good of the country regardless of the traditional party line. His strength is indicated by the ganging-up against him among the regular machine politicians.

Some say that Mr. Willkie occupies a position in the Republican Party much like that so long occupied in the Democratic Party by William Jennings Bryan. Anyway, Mr. Willkie has a tremendous nuisance value, and whether or not the Republicans renominate him, he will not be ignored.

Governor Harold E. Stassen of Minnesota is a young and rapidly rising figure who has demonstrated the same courage and foresight regarding foreign policy that Mr. Willkie has shown. In the supposedly isolationist state of Minnesota, he was re-elected for a third term last November, and on a platform advocating fullest participation by the United States in international affairs after the war. He is one of the most aggressive of the leaders who urge that the United Nations be transformed into a strong world organization after the war.

GOVERNOR STASSEN long ago decided to go into the navy as soon as his legislature adjourned. So for some time to come he will be out of politics, absent in uniform. He will have resigned as governor. Of course he expects to return to public life. He has friends who wish him to run for the Presidential nomination next year. The length of the war may have some bearing on his future plans. His youth gives him time.

Another young man is Governor Thomas Dewey of New York. He has the advantage of having recently been elected governor of the President's own state. Because New York is the largest state, any man who can be elected governor there becomes an eligible Presidential figure unless specifically eliminated by some other consideration. And a Republican thus elected becomes of enormous interest as a vote-getting possibility.

However, Governor Dewey said at the time of his nomination for governor that he intended to devote himself wholly to the service of the people of New York for the next four years. He has repeated that statement several times since his election and has stated that he will not under any circumstances be a candidate for any nomination during his first term as governor. Neither politicians nor the people take such renunciations seriously. It is expected that Governor Dewey's attitude toward the nomination will depend entirely upon the outlook in the summer of 1944.

At the moment, the figure favored

by a number of Republican Party insiders is Governor John W. Bricker of Ohio, a conservative who takes no stand on anything. Bricker has made a good governor of Ohio and has been re-elected for a third term by an unprecedented vote. He also carried Ohio in 1940 when President Roosevelt carried the state. Governor Bricker is a good Ohio vote getter.

Senator Robert A. Taft, twice the Presidential hope of Ohio Republicans, has stepped aside for Governor Bricker this time and has willed to him, at least for the time being, the Republican leaders in Southern states who form a nice nucleus at a national convention. Their allegiance to Taft, with a few exceptions, was demonstrated at the recent Republican National Committee meeting when a majority of the Southern national committee men and committee women supported his candidate for national chairman.

Governor Bricker is the current darling of the regular conservative party leaders who think that it will be politics as usual next year, with the same kind of set-up that the Republicans had when they shoved Harding into the sure-thing nomination of 1920. At that time the Republicans knew they would win, and the party insiders who knew what they wanted picked a nationally obscure and colorless candidate. If history is going to repeat, then it's Bricker by big odds.

THE first World War was the exception to the rule that wars produce a flock of Presidential candidates and some Presidents. Republicans are keeping their eyes open for a war hero. Already there has been much talk of General MacArthur, although apparently without any encouragement from him. It seems hardly likely that the war will be over by the summer of 1944, and that might obscure the attention that might otherwise be directed to Republican political figures now in uniform, such as Brigadier General Patrick Hurley, Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., and Brigadier General Hanford MacNider.

Thus Republicans have every type of prospective candidate. They have Willkie, the aggressive outspoken follower of the Roosevelt foreign policy; Stassen, the newer figure from the Middle West; Dewey, the passive vote getter in New York; Bricker, the silent favorite of the insiders; and several military figures.

Out of that list the Republicans will be able to pick a pair of candidates best adapted to the political conditions as they exist at the time of the campaign next year.

THE END

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"DINAH MITE"—AN UNFORGETTABLE B-17

Continued from Page 21

told at what time they were to take off and at what time they would be over the target and when they would be expected back at the station.

The briefing finished, the Dinah Mite and her sister ships took off.

"It went like clockwork," said Lieutenant Sammons. "There were only a few clouds, but by the time we'd got over the Channel and had picked up our escort even those had disappeared. Our ship was in No. 3 position—the last ship on the right wing in the rear element—and we just sailed along. We flew high, and we kept there all the time. There wasn't any haze, and below us we could see the Channel and then the French coast. It sure looked pretty and peaceful.

"After we passed over the coast and headed in toward Lille we began to get some heavy flak. It was accurate enough as to height, but it didn't touch us, because I kept changing our altitude and course just enough to confuse them. Sort of weaving in and out and up and down, like.

"By the time we got near Lille things warmed up considerably. There were more planes around than I'd ever seen at one time—scores of our bombers and many, many more escort fighters (they were Spitfires mostly) and I don't know how many German pursuit planes. Anyway, they were thick as bees.

"Just before we went into the bombing run I looked over the red beam"—the red and green lights on the wing tips are used to indicate port and starboard, respectively—"and saw a B-24 going down with its No. 4 engine on fire. It had been hit by a FW-190. That was the first time the B-24s had been over, and I could see this one spiraling down with the flame spitting out.

"AS we went over the target I could see bursts all around and on it. I guess we did our share too, though of course you can hardly ever see the hits your own ship makes. Mostly you see the hits made by the ship ahead of you. Anyway, we dropped our load and started back. There was heavy smoke coming up from all over the target area, and also a big column of fire.

"It was when we started back that things began to get really hot for us. Nine ME-109s kept coming in at us on the lower green stern. Sully—the ball turret man—opened up on them at about 700 yards, and he got one of them, or at least we could see it going down out of control in a whorl of black smoke and fire.

"After that five of the remaining ME-109s circled around to the red stern, and this time Sully fired from about 500 yards. He's as good a man as they come—and this time he got two more of them. Both of them went straight down, like hot rocks. Sully sure must have been whirling around in that turret.

"Well, you have to give the rest of those MEs credit—they didn't give up even then. Back they came again—this time right at our tail, head on. Sergeant Wilbur, the tail gunner, was ready for them, though. He fired at about 400 yards and one of them started to spin down. Wilbur claims he got it. The tail gunner on another ship saw it, and he says Wilbur got it, too.

"That left five of those MEs, and three of them veered off and went away. But the two others circled up and came in on the red bow. It seemed like they wanted to give practically every gunner in that crew a chance to show what he could do, and this time it was Clements, the top turret man, who was at bat.

"Anyway, this ME turned its belly right where Clements could get it—and he did! One of the waist gunners says he saw that little old ME go down with smoke curling up from the cockpit and that from where he stood it didn't look as if it had a chance.

"Well, I guess that's about all there was to it. All that was happening on our way back to the coast, and by the time we were within two or three minutes of the coast the fighters had sort of faded away behind us.

"Nothing else much happened after that, except that one of the B-17s with us had been hit by cannon fire—I think it was cannon fire, though sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between that and the tracers—and it kept losing altitude. By the time we were over the Channel it was down to about 5,000 feet. I looked back and I could see it suddenly go down toward the water, all on fire. We learned later that all of the crew had been picked up by the Air-Sea Rescue Service.

"So we got back to the station, and there wasn't a hole in the ship. But there would have been plenty of holes if it hadn't been for the job our gunners did. That's the kind of a crew to have, all right. With boys who can shoot like that, you're just about as safe as you can ever expect to be—in that particular line of work, that is.

"Well, I guess that's about all there was to it."

NURSE'S
AID
TRAINING
A.W.

"Wipe off the ketchup, Mac—she'll never make a nurse."

THE experience Lieutenant Sammons described can probably be termed "average." Other ships and other crews had an easier time of it, and still others had more difficult times. The ship came back and the men told their stories at the interrogation which follows immediately their return to the station. Then they relaxed to wait for the next operation.

Meanwhile there were practice flights to be made and guns to be kept clean and lectures to hear and charts to study. Meanwhile, too, there were Bob Hope and the back-home football scores to listen to on Sunday afternoon and an occasional trip to the movies at one of the towns near by, and, every ten days, a thirty-six-hour pass to London, with even rainy pavements a welcome change from mud. And always there was the talk—the shop talk. "Then she turned in"—a hand skims through the air, fishlike—"and the tail gunner let go at her. He got her and the one right behind her. Boy, it was like knocking over clay pigeons."

Lieutenant Sammons and his crew still talk fondly of the lost ship. They have taken other B-17s out, and they readily agree that they are good ships.

Only—well, they aren't exactly up to the Dinah Mite.

"I don't know," says Lieutenant Sammons. "She always seemed to be kind of special."

THE END

(Continued from page 32)

heard herself saying, "I been wanting to talk to you. I guess you got things a little mixed up about me. I sent the dress back because I don't want presents like that from you. Nor I don't like you taking me home or taking me to work in your automobile and talking about having dates with me. I'm married. My husband happens to be sick and in the hospital right now, but I don't have dates. I never did, and I don't now."

Nicky Toresca sent his cigarette flipping off the tips of his fingers into a wide rosy arc in the snow.

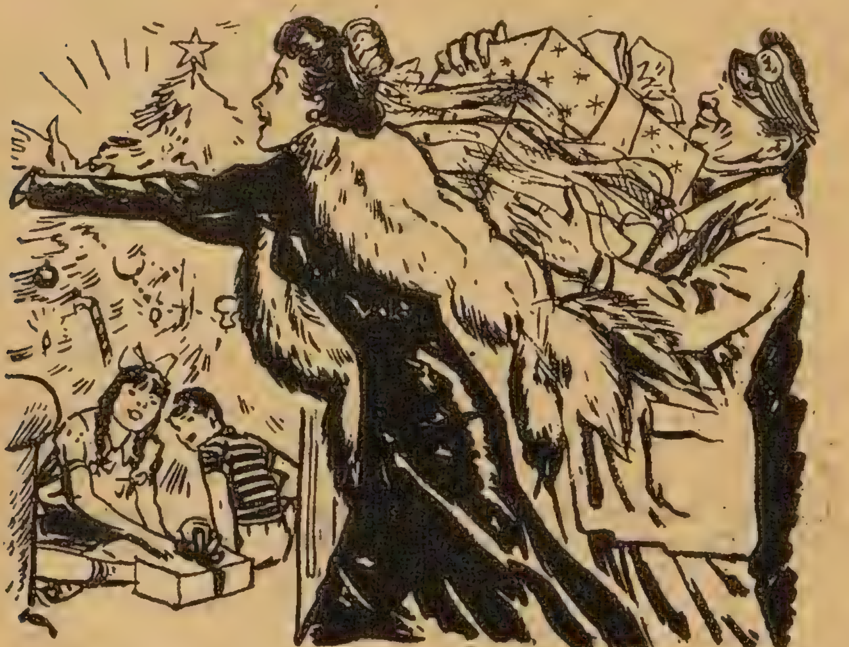
"I could do a lot for you, Sally. You got some kids to take care of, and, if you are smart like I think you are, you don't want to lose a nice job that pays pretty good money right in the middle of the winter. Do you, Sally?"

"I guess this is one job I can't keep," Sally said slowly, "I think maybe I better quit. Don't you?"

"No, I don't think you better quit," he said. "You need that job, and, hell, I guess I can take a hint."

Sally looked up at him questioningly.

Without warning, he pulled her up against him and kissed her, his mouth bruising hard against her lips.



Sally's body went rigid and unresisting. With unblinking eyes she watched snow filtering down among the innumerable pine trees and feathering the branches with white.

This isn't me and this isn't really Christmas Eve, Sally kept thinking without emotion. This is some bad dream I am having. This is a nightmare where all kinds of impossible things happen. There are Christmas presents wrapped up in bright paper, and the children will hang up their stockings, and I will fill them, and there will be the Christmas Eve party tonight. But I mustn't let that fool me, because it isn't real. It couldn't be. We're not living in our own home on Toomis Road; we're in a strange apartment on Horton Street. Roy isn't even there, so it couldn't be home. And Nicky Toresca is going to buy our Christmas tree, and he just kissed me in a vacant lot among the Christmas trees and said strange threatening things to me that I can't understand. So it can't be true. This is a bad dream I am having. I must keep remembering that. It's a bad dream, and that's why I feel so funny, as if I wasn't here or there or anywhere, as if I didn't really exist. But finally Nicky let her go, and then somehow from deep inside her, Sally found a will of her own again. And there she was walking to the car, Nicky behind her carrying the tree, and then she was leaning back, tired, against the cushions and Nicky was driving her home, silent, and for the first time since she knew him, sulky.

Nicky Toresca stopped the car at the curb. Sally jumped out quickly, and Nicky handed her the tree. "Merry Christmas," she said and walked up to the porch.

"Well, hi, everybody," Sally called as she came in the door. "Did you think I was never gonna get home here?" The small room was full of noise and confusion. Sally carried the Christmas tree in to the middle of the floor. She pulled her hat off and scrambled out of her coat. "Joey," she said, lifting her voice again. "Oh, I'm so glad you could come! It wouldn't have been Christmas without my baby brother."

"Hi yuh, sis. Merry Christmas!" Joe said awkwardly. On her way to the closet to hang up her coat and hat, Sally dropped a kiss on Joe's forehead. The part of Sally that watched the dream in which she was lost said, See, this couldn't be real. That couldn't really be Joe—not that fellow in the brand-new suit, with his hair slicked back so smooth, lolling there in that chair with a cigarette hanging out of his mouth, like a cheap carbon copy of Nicky Toresca.

Sally slammed the closet door, and stopped to kiss Virginia, who was curled up on the end of the davenport. "How you feel, honey? You look fine."

"Where you want the tree, Sally—over here by the window?" Joe asked.

"Yes, don't you think? Here, wait a minute; I'll pin the curtains back out of the way. And before we start trimmin' the tree, I wanta run over to O'Connors a minute and see if I can't get Gloria to come over."

The voices thinned out a little, and Joe asked soberly, "How is Johnny, anyway?"

"Well, not so good, I guess," Sally answered. "He had to stay in the hospital, you know."

FOR a moment the room was quiet, and then Sally went on. "Look," she said, "after Gloria gets over here, let's not talk about Johnny, huh? Let's just not say anything about him after she gets here."

"Oh, boy, here comes the angel for the Christmas tree," Joe said appreciatively as Sally returned with Gloria. "Hi yuh, Gloria?"

"Ma, now can we trim the tree? Are we all ready now?" the children called.

"Yup, now we're gonna trim the tree," Sally told them.

Sally had only two strings of lights, and it took a great deal of stretching and maneuvering to make them do for a tree of this size. When she had them all arranged, she said, "Now, everybody, close your eyes while I plug in the lights to see if they're working. Nobody but me is supposed to see the tree lighted till it's all fixed."

With joking and laughter they all promised to close their eyes. Sally plugged the double socket into the floor plug and watched the little bulbs wink on all over the tree. She pulled out the socket. "Everything is fine. You can open your eyes now," she said.

At last all the presents were deposited in a shining multicolored heap. Then everybody returned to their chairs and Sally plugged in the light switch. The twenty or thirty little bulbs came alive with color, shining over the tree and the pile of presents. The children shrieked in a kind of contented excitement.

Then came the interruption—doors banging, a rich booming laughter, and then a clatter of feet coming up the stairs. A rich, deep, loud voice from the hallway: "Brother, watch that top step—it's darker'n Tut's Tomb in this joint!" Then the voices grew louder and there was a rush of steps down the hall.

"Hey, hey! Does Sally Otis live some place in this house? Sally! Where are you, honey? Sally!"

Sally jumped to her feet, her face suddenly white and tense. The door stood ajar, and the first thing that came in view was a long silk-stockinged leg with a black suede pump as the door was kicked open—and there she was. A tall girl with a mane of black curly hair to her shoulders, dressed in black, with the tails of a couple of silver foxes bumping at her knees, and a silly little hat stuck on the back of her head with a couple of yards of veil trailing behind her. Her arms were filled to overflowing with the sparkle and color of paper-and-ribbon-wrapped packages.

"Oh, Petey, Petey!" Sally said. She crumpled up into the chair and began to cry as if her heart would break, as if she would never stop crying again.

Petey unceremoniously dumped her armload of packages into Joe's lap. "Here, hold these a minute," she said. "And don't drop 'em! Some of 'em break."

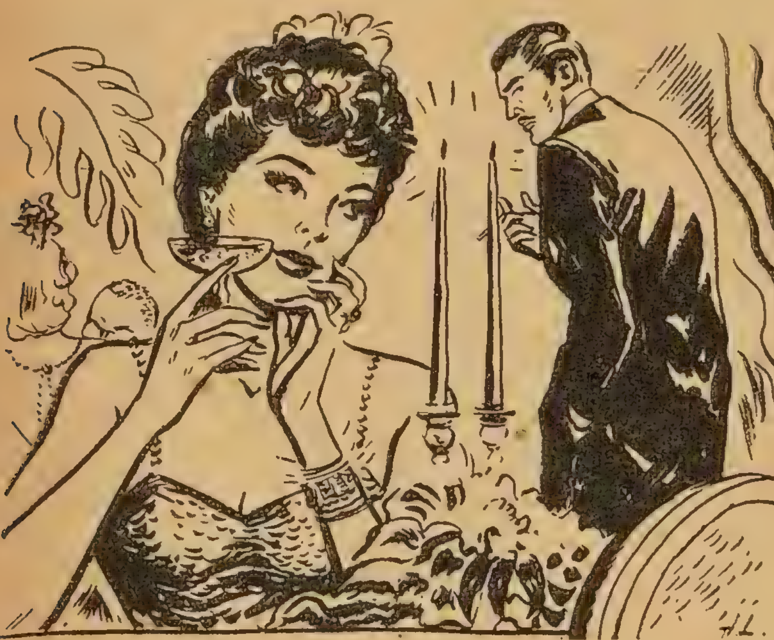
In two strides she was across the little room and her arms were around Sally. "Aw, Sally! Things have been tough for you, kid, haven't they? Why didn't you let me know?"

"Say, lady," a man's voice said plaintively from the doorway.

Everybody in the room jumped, because everybody in the room was looking at Petey.

It was the taxi driver, who had trailed Petey up the stairs with another armload of Christmas gifts, standing patiently inside the door, with packages piled in his arms up to his nose.

"Here, I'll take part of those," Petey said. "By the looks of things around here, I guess you unload over here by the tree."



Petey snapped open the big suede purse she carried under her arm. "Well, merry Christmas, Joe," she said, handing the man a couple of bills.

The taxi driver glanced at the bills and smiled broadly. "Thank you," he said. "Merry Christmas!"

As Petey swung around from the door, her eye caught Joe. She paused and then moved toward him slowly, her hands outstretched. "Joey! Little brother Joey!" she marveled. "Honey, I haven't seen you more'n three times since you been out of diapers. Come and give me a kiss. I bet you don't even remember me. My Lord, maybe you don't even know who I am!"

Joe got up to meet her a little awkwardly. "Well, I remember a little and I heard a lot," he said; "and seeing there couldn't be anybody else like you in the world, that makes you my sister Petey."

Petey kissed Joe and hugged him hard, and then she turned back to the others. "Now wait a minute," she said. "Maybe I've got some more relatives mixed up in this party."

Her eyes traveled from one face to another, and came to rest momentarily on Gloria O'Connor. She tilted her head, looking her up and down appreciatively. "It wouldn't be you, sweet," she murmured. "We don't grow blondes in our family."

Then she saw Virginia huddled in her corner of the davenport. Petey was across the room instantly with her amazing long stride. "You're Virginia," she said. "I can remember you when you were a baby. But I bet I know what you feel like when a great big grown-up woman that you've never seen before in your life comes busting in here and tells you she's your sister." Petey stooped suddenly and kissed Virginia on the forehead.

As she straightened up, Petey shook a finger at Harold. "And I don't need to look but once to tell who you are. I know your father, so I couldn't miss on you. Hi yuh, Harold?" And then, all in one sudden motion, she scooped up the children from the floor, one in either arm. "You're Buddy," she said, kissing his astonished little face hard. "And you're Marilyn." She kissed her too, and then kissed them both again. "And who am I?" she said. "Quick, now—one, two, three, four, five, six—"

"Aunt Petey!" both children screamed together, winding their arms around her neck and covering her face with kisses.

"That's good, that's fine," Petey said. "Now, the thing is for you to get to bed pretty soon, so Santa Claus can come. You don't wanta hold him up, you know. He's got a lot of places to stop tonight."

Sally got up from her chair then and came to Petey's side. In that short space of time Sally had gotten control of herself again. "I'm terribly sorry, Petey," she said. "I guess I must have been tired out, or something, to go to pieces like that."

Harold and Virginia went off to bed, and the small children began the old argument about whose turn it was in the bathroom. Joe, too, got to his feet and went to the closet for his coat and hat.

"You goin' some place, Joey?"

"Yeah; I got some things to tend to yet tonight. I gotta job, you know. I'm workin' for Nicky Toresca," he added impressively.

"Well, I wouldn't know," Petey said sweetly. "I never heard of the gent."

"Well, you will if you stay around this town long enough," Joe bragged.

She watched Joe leave, a look of speculation on her face, her head resting on her doubled arms.

"You're so tanned," Sally marveled. "Where have you been since New York? Where did you come from?"

"Since New York? Florida, Cuba, Bermuda, Nassau—" Petey ticked them off on her fingers. "I came up here from Florida. Nice country down below. I have a notion to bleach my hair and try South America."

"Gee!" Sally laid her cigarette down on the ash tray and stared at her sister, chin propped on her hand. "You'll never know how glad I was to see you walk in tonight," she said. "Honest, Petey, you'll never know how glad I was. Once in a while things get all balled up for me, till it seems like I can't go on for another day. I don't know what in the world I'd of ever done if you hadn't come tonight."

She reached for the cigarette again and puffed it slowly. At last she looked up to Petey with a little laugh that was almost a sob. "Honest, I've got so much to tell, I don't know where to begin."

"Well, let's start with Roy," Petey said. "Is he better? When is he gonna get out of that place?"

And then Sally started talking, the words rushing out, and she talked for a long time. All her troubles and worries. Roy and the children, and Virginia and Joe. Financial troubles, her job, and finally Nicky Toresca and her fear of him. Petey asked quick questions about Nicky Toresca, and Sally described him as best she could. Finally they happened to notice the clock. My Lord, Petey said, they better get to bed and give poor old Santa Claus a break around here.

PETEY got into her black velvet coat again, and the silly little hat. Sally stood beside her and picked up her heavy furs, stroked them lovingly, enjoying their softness and beauty and the faint sweetness of Petey's perfume that clung to them.

Petey swept a handful of veil back from her face and dropped a light kiss on Sally's forehead. She would see her the first thing in the morning. She was to sleep and not worry any more, and a very merry Christmas. Petey took the furs and was gone before Sally had a chance to walk to the door with her.

Christmas night Petey changed into a dinner dress, swirled out of the hotel in a flash of sequins, and hailed a cab.

"Hi, yuh, Joe," Petey said cheerfully as she settled herself on the cab seat and crossed her legs comfortably. "Nicky Toresca's—and I'm in a hurry!"

In a couple of minutes the cab pulled up at the curb in front of the smart modern façade that bore the one word in big neon letters: TORESCA'S.

Petey paused in the snow only long enough to hand a bill to the doorman. "You boys split the difference," she said carelessly, and then she strode across the wet sidewalk to the entrance.

She walked to the top of one of the two short flights of steps that led down to the small dance floor and the tables. Petey looked the room over at her leisure, oblivious of the heads turned in her direction.

"I'd like that one in the corner at the back," she said at last, and she started down the steps, the waiter at her heels.

The waiter seated her and Petey raised her face and spoke confidentially: "Looky, Joe. Is Mr. Toresca around?"

The waiter's voice and his pale face were both noncommittal when he answered her: "I dunno." He looked at Petey speculatively. "You got a date with him?"

Petey ignored that question. She opened her bag and slid a bill out onto the table-top underneath her fingers, folded so that the denomination showed.

"You think maybe you could find out if Mr. Toresca is around?" She slid the bill back and forth a little under her fingers as she spoke.

The waiter looked at the bill appreciatively, but his voice was still noncommittal. "I dunno. Maybe I could find out—I dunno."

"Aw, I bet you could, Joe. You look like a bright boy."

The waiter suddenly pocketed the bill. "O. K.," he said. "What you want me to tell him?"

PETEY leaned back in her chair once more and took a sip of her drink. "Now, looky, Joe. Get this straight. You tell Mr. Toresca that Joe Braun's sister is out in front and wants to see him, and that it's important."

Several minutes slid by, and Petey did not move. Suddenly the door back of the orchestra opened and Nicky Toresca emerged. He wore evening clothes, his hands thrust easily into his pockets. He stood still momentarily, his eyes roving over the room, and when they came to Petey they stopped momentarily, and Petey half smiled at him. He looked away, his face still blank and contained. He started walking slowly toward the flight of steps up to the bar.

Just as he passed her table, Petey spoke in her low deep voice with just the faintest shade of amusement in it. "Good evening, Mr. Toresca."

He stopped and looked at her. Then his eyes darted away to the bar and beyond the bar toward the checkroom.

Petey waited just the space of a second or two, and then she said, "Joe Braun has three sisters. Did you know that, Mr. Toresca?"

Nicky Toresca pulled out the other chair at her table and sat down. A waiter, threading in and out among the tables, came toward him instantly. Nicky Toresca nodded his head briefly, and the waiter hurried up the steps to the bar. He returned with two drinks before Nicky Toresca spoke.

"You must be a stranger in town."

"That's right," Petey said. She took a sip of her drink and said, "It's a nice town. The more I see of it, the better I like it."

Nicky Toresca smiled then, and slid down in his chair a little, his hands deep in his pockets, his eyes fixed on Petey steadily. "I think maybe this town could do a lot for you," he said at last.

"I think maybe I could do quite a lot for this town."

Nicky Toresca looked at her appreciatively. "I think you might, at that," he said with amusement in his voice.

Petey said, "I'm nice—and I know an awful lot of things—and—I sing. People like it."

"Is that right!" The interest and the amusement were plain on Nicky Toresca's face now.

"Yup! Maybe you'd like a sample of that?"

"Go ahead," he said. "I'm listening."

She mounted the steps to the orchestra stand confidently, and said, "Hi yuh, boys." The young orchestra leader looked away to Nicky Toresca in the back of the room questioningly. He nodded his head in answer.

Petey slipped her hand through the leader's arm and spoke. "Look, boys. I want a job singing here, and I need it. We'll have to mug through without rehearsin', but I think we can make it. Are you with me?"

"Sure. Sure thing. Atta girl!"

"How about There'll be Some Changes Made?"

"How you want it?" the piano player said morosely.

Petey leaned over his shoulder and struck a chord softly with her fingers.

"Way down there?" the piano player said doubtfully.

"That's where my voice is—way down there."

Petey adjusted the small microphone up to her height with the competent ease of familiarity.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen." Her voice did not suffer over the microphone at all, and almost immediately voices began to thin out as even more eyes were turned in her direction.

She spoke with a sort of confidential intimacy that in some mysterious way seemed to set up an instantaneous and personal contact between herself and each person in her audience.

"I heard a song the other day, and it's been running around in my head ever since. I was just talking to the band boys about it, and Joe here, at the piano, says he heard it, too. We're going to pass it along to you, and I hope you like it. Ladies and gentlemen, this is gonna be strictly on the house!"

Petey's infectious laughter drew a ready response, and amid that laughter and a scattering of applause she nodded her head to the morose and doubtful piano player. She moved over nearer to the piano as he played a few opening bars for her, and nodded her head approvingly, and then walked back to the microphone.

Her voice was very low and husky and oddly musical, but, more than her voice, it was Petey herself and her terrific vitality and this mysterious contact she could establish with an audience that put her song across.

Petey finished the song to applause, which she acknowledged with a graceful half curtsy, her head dropped low, and then she turned away and picked up her cape from the chair back.

She waved her hand, nodded to the musicians once more, and left the orchestra stand, while the orchestra leader picked up his program where she had interrupted it. She made her way to the table in the back of the room and sat down in the chair across from Nicky Toresca.

"What's your name?" he asked her.

"Most folks call me Petey."

Nicky Toresca leaned forward in his chair and closed his hand tight over hers on the table-top. "I don't guess this town could get along without you, Petey," he said softly.

SALLY had never dreaded a visit to Roy as much as she dreaded that visit the week after Christmas. Roy must have been so hurt, so disappointed. To look forward to a release was one thing, a vague indefinite date sometime in the future, one never knew just when; but to look forward to a Christmas parole was another.

At the hospital she didn't see the nurse until she touched her on the shoulder. "Hello, Mrs. Otis. How are you?" the girl said, smiling. Sally gathered up her packages and rose to follow.

"Well, did you have a nice Christmas?" the nurse asked cheerfully as they walked along the corridor.

Sally's voice stuck in her throat. There were so many, many things that she must ask in the short space of time before she saw Roy. Sally cleared her throat, and listened to her own voice, warm and natural, saying, "Yes, we had an awful nice Christmas, thank you."

They paused then, while the young woman went through the ritual of unlocking and locking doors, and then they mounted the stairs together.

"My husband," Sally said, "How—how has he been?"

"Fairly well, Mrs. Otis." She answered Sally briskly.

"He must have been terribly disappointed and blue, wasn't he?" Sally insisted desperately. "About not getting the parole, I mean. He hasn't written a word to me, and I've been so worried."

They paused again, while the nurse relocked another door behind them. "Well, of course, Mrs. Otis, he was very disappointed. I think I warned you about that, your last visit." The nurse's voice was friendly. "These last few days he's been a little—difficult."

"Difficult?" Sally echoed the word in a voice that almost trembled.

"Oh, nothing serious, really," the nurse hastened to reassure her. "He simply refused to talk, or associate with the other patients, and we had a little trouble in getting him to eat and take his medicine."

Sally was silent with the fear pressing at her lungs.

"You must be very cheerful today," the nurse said kindly. "Don't make too big a fuss over him. He mustn't be encouraged to feel sorry for himself."

The nurse relocked the last door behind them and said, "You better leave the cigarettes here at the desk. I'll mark them with his name."

The nurse lowered her voice a little as they approached the turn in the corridor. "Another thing. Mr. Otis may act a little resentful toward you at first. If he does, I would try to ignore it, if I were you."

They came to the turn in the corridor, and Sally put the smile on her face, and felt her heart beat, a quick, dull thudding in her body. They turned the corner, and there was Roy standing motionless in the doorway down the corridor on the left. Sally felt first the shock she always felt, noticing each time she came how thin he was and how stooped his shoulders. The next second she forgot everything except her joy in seeing Roy once again, after separation.

She called out to him, her voice uneven with tenderness:

"Roy! Hi, darling!"

He called "Hi" to her, but he didn't come to meet her.

"Gosh, it's good to see you! Seems like it's been so long! How are you, darling?"

Sally stood on tiptoe, but his kiss was brief.

They sat down, and Sally put her magazines and candy on a corner of the table. The nurse adjusted the door wide open and then smiled at them over her shoulder. "Have a nice visit, now!"

When she was gone, the room was very still momentarily. Roy sat stiff and straight on his chair without speaking. He was looking at Sally, but his face was blank and expressionless, and he sat so still that he hardly seemed to breathe or wink an eyelid.

"You want a cigarette, dear?" Sally said brightly.

"No, I don't!" he said, and there was something cold and strange in his voice.

"My golly, don't tell me you're cuttin' down on your smoking, after all the talkin' I've done for all these years!" Sally's laughter sounded warm and natural.

Roy broke in on her with laughter of his own—but unnatural laughter, with that strange cold quality about it. "Yeah," he said. "I guess you're doin' a lot of things now you never used to do when I was to home."

"Aw, Roy honey, what's the matter?"

"Nothin's the matter. I'm fine." He smiled a little, a secretive smile, as if he savored some joke that was unknown to her. That smile frightened Sally even more than anything he had said to her. Because that smile was familiar to her—because it belonged to dark days long months ago when Roy was not himself at all, when he was a frightening, tormenting stranger to her.

SALLY caught her breath and went on talking. "Roy Otis, you never said a word about my new hat! A fine thing! Here I get a new hat, and I save it to wear down here to see you, and then you never even notice it!"

"Oh, I noticed it all right," he said, with the odd smile at his lips.

"Do you like it?" Sally chattered on desperately. "And this is new too, and this—see?" She indicated her bag and scarf as she spoke. "Petey gave them to me. Wasn't that sweet of her?"

"So Petey gave 'em to you, huh?" Roy said with the sardonic, secretive amusement.

"Uh huh. It was awful nice of her, don't you think?" Sally was running out of things to talk about, and she picked up the magazines and held them out to him.

With one abrupt motion he pushed the magazines out of her hand back onto the table, and he caught her wrist tight in his fingers, pulling her toward him. Out of balance as she was, Sally scrambled to her feet to keep from falling. But still the relentless pressure on her wrist, pulling her toward him.

"Roy, stop. You're hurting me. Please!" Sally's breath came short and loud and uneven.

"You don't even want me to touch you, do you?" he said softly. "You belong to him now, don't you?"

"Him?" Sally stammered over the word, her face pale and bewildered.

"Did you think you could fool me forever?" he said in soft amusement. "I guess I'm smart enough to know you couldn't keep goin' on the money you claimed they paid you at that restaurant! I guess I know who's givin' you money and buyin' you hats and stuff, an' I know why he's doin' it, too! You can't fool me! You thought you could, but you can't."

"Roy, stop! You don't mean these things you're sayin'."

He was on his feet instantly, his face twisted into leering triumph. He shook Sally hard with both hands and then flung her away from him. "Oh, no," he said. "I knew just how the land lay when I found out how you fixed it so I couldn't come home for Christmas. I always knew what you was like. You're just like that sister o' yours. You're a good pair, the both of you. I know why you're keepin' me locked up here!"

Sally crouched at the end of the table, clutching it tightly with both hands for support, her face turned toward him, white and flat, her eyes enormous and half blind in her face.

His voice rose and he lunged toward her. "Comin' down here, smilin' and showin' off in the hat *he* bought you." He grabbed at the hat with rough, clumsy hands, tearing it from her head and twisting it out of shape before he threw it to the floor.

Sally backed away from him on numb feet, her hair hanging disheveled over her white face and down into her eyes.

"Women like you ain't fit to live, to marry decent guys and be the mother o' little innocent kids!"

He lunged toward her again, and Sally was too stupefied and paralyzed to elude him. He shook her roughly with one hand, and slapped her hard across the face, and then tore at the front of her dress with rough, furious fingers.

At that moment the ward helpers came, and somehow—Sally would never know just how—she was loosened from his frenzied hands and hustled out of the room, away down the corridor, leaving a sound of shouts and struggle behind her.

QUITE a while later, Sally sat beside the desk of the young doctor, listening to the words he said to her. Her face was a little pale; her hat was set firmly on her head, bent slightly, but still becoming. Her face was quite steady as she listened, and so were her eyes, with no traces of weeping about them—because, as a matter of fact, Sally had not wept.

"May I say again how sorry I am that you had to be subjected to such an experience this afternoon?" the doctor said gently. "As I have told you, such an outbreak is beyond our powers of prediction or prevention."

"No, it's all right," Sally said as she stood up from her chair. "I don't blame any of you for anything. How could you tell or know? Besides, I don't care about myself. It's—it's him I'm thinking about."

"As I have said, you are not to take this outbreak too seriously," the doctor said. "It may not be in the nature of a serious setback. Only time will tell. But for the time being I am suspending your visiting privilege entirely. I think you understand that that is for the best?"

"I understand, doctor," Sally said.

As Sally climbed the stairs at home that night, she paused momentarily outside the door to the O'Connors' apartment. The familiar blast of loud radio music blared out from the other side of the door and made knocking useless.

Sally turned the knob and called out "Hi!" as the door swung open.

Gloria, in a print housecoat that fitted snugly to the curves of her soft body, was curled up on the end of the davenport. The face she lifted to Sally was marked with tears.

"Hello," she said.

Sally closed the door behind her and sat down. "I thought I'd stop in a minute. I haven't seen you in a month of Sundays. How are you? How's the baby?"

"I'm all right. Bevy's fine," Gloria said.

When she stopped talking, her eyes wandered away and her mouth drooped down at the corners tragically.

Sally sighed a little, the sound lost in the blaring radio music. "Gosh, I hate to go in there and get supper," she said. "I got the blues right tonight. For two cents I could just bust out cryin' or run away some place."

Suddenly, without warning, the tears ran down Gloria's face again and the muscles in her smooth white throat bunched and contracted as she swallowed a sob. "I feel just awful," she said in a shaking voice. "I'm gettin' so tired of this, I just can't hardly stand it!"

Sally walked over to the radio and tuned it down. Her face looked very serious. "You're gettin' so tired of what, Gloria, that you can't hardly stand it?"

"Just settin' around here all the time. I can't go downtown shoppin'. I can't go to the movies. We can't go places nor nothin'. Johnny says we can't. I just have to set around here all the time. I'm gettin' so sick of it, I can't hardly stand it!"

For the first time since Sally had known her, she lost her patience completely with Gloria. For two cents, Sally thought, she would walk right over there and shake her until her teeth rattled.

But when Sally spoke, her voice was controlled and almost gentle. "Gloria," she said, "you're talking just like some little kid instead of a grown-up woman with a husband and a baby. You're actin' just like you thought Johnny was making you stay home here just to be mean or something. And you know better than that. You know Johnny's had a run of bad luck. He's been sick and he can't work yet, and he's lost his job. He just hasn't got the money to take you places or buy you things."

"But when's Johnny gonna have the money?" Gloria wailed. "Johnny always used to have the money."

Sally's face tightened a little. "All right, then," she said brusquely. "If that's the way you feel about it, why don't you go out and get a job? If you get a job you'll be earnin' money, and then you can go places again and buy things, and, besides, it'll help Johnny out till he gets back on his feet."

Gloria's crying stopped as suddenly as it had begun. She stared at Sally with a blank, bewildered face. "Get a job?"

"Why not?" Sally said impatiently. "You're young and strong. You could work. And while Johnny can't work, he could look after the baby. It would be a change for you, and it might give you a little spendin' money so you could go out nights like you like to."

Gloria's face was incredulous, but something like a glimmer of interest showed on it as well. "Where could I get a job?" she said. "I don't know how to do nothin'."

"You're a size thirty-six, aren't you?" Sally said impatiently.

"Sure," Gloria said.

"Oh, I knew it," Sally said happily. "Look here!" She held a newspaper out to Gloria, indicating one of the items in the employment column with her finger.

Gloria looked at it obediently.

"It's an ad from the corset factory here in town," Sally explained rapidly. "You could get that job without half trying—anybody with a perfect figure like you got—and that's your size. See, it says they pay good, too!"

Gloria looked at Sally and then at the paper and at Sally again, her face bewildered. "You mean it's a job? You mean they want somebody just to try on corsets—they'll pay money for it?"

"That's what it says," Sally said triumphantly.

"I know where it is," Gloria said slowly. "I seen the sign once when— Well, maybe I will."

"Good!" said Sally. "I thought of you the minute I saw this ad. I don't care if there's fifty other women there, I bet you'll get the job. Now, don't forget."

At the door she hesitated a little. "Look, Gloria. If I was you, I wouldn't say anything at all about gettin' a job to Johnny. Why don't you wait till Wednesday, and then surprise him, huh? Will you do that?"

"Well, sure," Gloria said slowly. "I could wait till Wednesday and surprise Johnny."

PETEY finished her first group of songs at Toresca's and made her leisurely way toward the bar, pausing at several tables on the way to talk. As she walked along the bar she saw Johnny O'Connor. Petey had liked Johnny from the moment she met him. She didn't like seeing him sitting there alone and glum with a drink.

"Hello, Petey," he said. "Would you do me the honor a' havin' a drink with me, maybe?"

"Hi, Johnny." Petey slid up on the stool beside him. "How are the hands comin'?"

"Fine," Johnny said as he struck a match for her cigarette. "The doc says in a couple weeks they'll be as good as new."

"No rest for the wicked!" Petey said cheerfully. "First thing you know, Johnny, you'll have to go back to work."

"Yeah, ain't it a shame!"

Petey laughed. "What's new with you?"

"Oh, hell," Johnny said. "I'm the original stay-at-home, play-at-home boy since Glory went to work. Tonight I got fed up. Glory was out gaddin' some place, so I got Virginia in to keep an eye on the baby and I come out for some air and a little night life."

Because she was looking in that direction, Petey saw them when they first came in together—Gloria with an orchid on her jacket, and the man with the dark hair and the round unpleasant face. Petey caught her breath silently and turned to Johnny.

He had seen them, all right. His body was rigid on the stool, his face tense, his eyes very bright. Just as Gloria and the man with her passed a group at the end of the bar, Gloria saw Johnny, too.

She stopped dead still, and then stood there with her face suddenly pale and frightened. The man stopped, too, a little behind her. He looked at her questioningly, and his eyes slid along the bar in the direction that she was looking. His eyes came to rest on Johnny, and stopped. The laughter went out of his face and he withdrew his arm slowly from Gloria's waist.

Johnny O'Connor caught his breath audibly. He put his glass down and slid from his stool all in one motion. But Petey was quicker. She moved just as Johnny did. In two strides she was across the floor, and her hand dropped lightly on Gloria's arm in a natural and friendly gesture.

"Well, hi!" Petey said with a friendly warmth in her voice. "Where you been? Johnny and I been waiting and waiting. We thought you two got lost or something. Come on over and have a drink before you go!"

Gloria's face was blank and stupid, but Petey slipped her hand through her arm, and another through the arm of Gloria's escort, and led them toward the bar.

As they approached Johnny, Petey said lightly, "Johnny, you and Gloria don't have to go home right this minute, do you? Gloria hasn't had a drink yet. You stay and have another drink while she has one, huh?"

Petey led them straight up to the bar. She landed Gloria on the stool beside Johnny's with a deft shove; she herself stood next, and Gloria's friend on the other side of her.

"Whatcha drinkin', honey?" Petey said to Gloria as the bartender waited.

Gloria was still speechless, and Johnny said, "She drinks Manhattans. Make mine the same."

Petey caught a nod from the man beside her. "O. K., Joe, four Manhattans."

"Too bad you missed the early show," Petey went on, including Gloria and the dark-haired man. "We were in top form tonight. You was here, weren't you, Johnny? We was doin' all right tonight, didn't you think?"

"Yeah."

Thus Petey kept the conversation alive. There was a little sound from Gloria, and Petey looked at her quickly. Gloria's face was puckered. She was trying very hard not to cry, but there were tears shining on her face.

Petey tasted her drink and cocked her ear at the orchestra. "Hey, that's all right!" she said. "There's a number I never do sit out unless I have to." She turned to the dark-haired man meaningfully.

"You care to dance this one?" he mumbled.

"Uh-huh." He followed her toward the stairs obediently. "Don't go away," she called back to Gloria and Johnny.

When the number was over at last, Petey led the way back to the bar, the dark-haired man at her heels. Gloria was losing her fight against tears, and Johnny stood down from his stool as they approached.

"I guess we have to run along now," he said to Petey quietly, and he turned to help Gloria down.

"Aw, I'm sorry you gotta go," Petey said. "You come in again soon when you can make a night of it, huh? Good night, honey." She squeezed Gloria's arm tight.

"Good night, Petey," Johnny said. "And thanks—for everything."

Petey stopped him with a quick little gesture.

"So long. Take it easy, Johnny!"

Johnny and Gloria walked down the ramp together, and neither one of them even looked at the dark-haired man who stood back at the bar again, a little behind Petey.

Petey said impersonally, "See you around again. I have to see a couple guys." She swung swiftly around on her heel, the full silken skirt of her gay flowered dress billowing.

EARLY Monday morning, Johnny O'Connor brought the baby and all of her feeding paraphernalia over to Sally's. By prearrangement, Virginia was to mind the baby for the day while Johnny started job hunting. He had a long, hard, fruitless day of it. It was eight o'clock before he trudged up the stairs on aching feet. The door to the apartment was locked, and, when he opened it, the room was dark and still and empty. Johnny was puzzled momentarily, and then he concluded that either Gloria was at Sally's or else she had made plans unexpectedly to remain downtown for the evening.

At Sally's he found the entire family eating supper in the kitchen. Why, no, Virginia said, she hadn't seen anything of Gloria all day. The baby had been just fine and not a bit of trouble. She had had her bottle and she was asleep. Johnny frowned a little. Had there been any telephone calls? It wasn't like Gloria to stay downtown without letting him know. Neither Virginia nor Sally had heard anything about any calls.

Johnny went into the dimly lighted bedroom and picked up the warm small bundle from the bed carefully. Johnny felt a lump of tenderness in his throat for this young daughter of his, who moved forward into childhood now almost with every hour, it seemed.

"There you are, honey-baby," Johnny said softly, his hands gentle and clumsy with her blankets. No, her diapers were still dry. Just as he stood up and straightened the blankets over her again, something caught his eye that stopped him dead still. The light was shining in from the living room, and in that shaft of light his eye caught a bureau drawer pulled out so far that it was about to fall. The next drawer was partly open too, and the drawer below that.

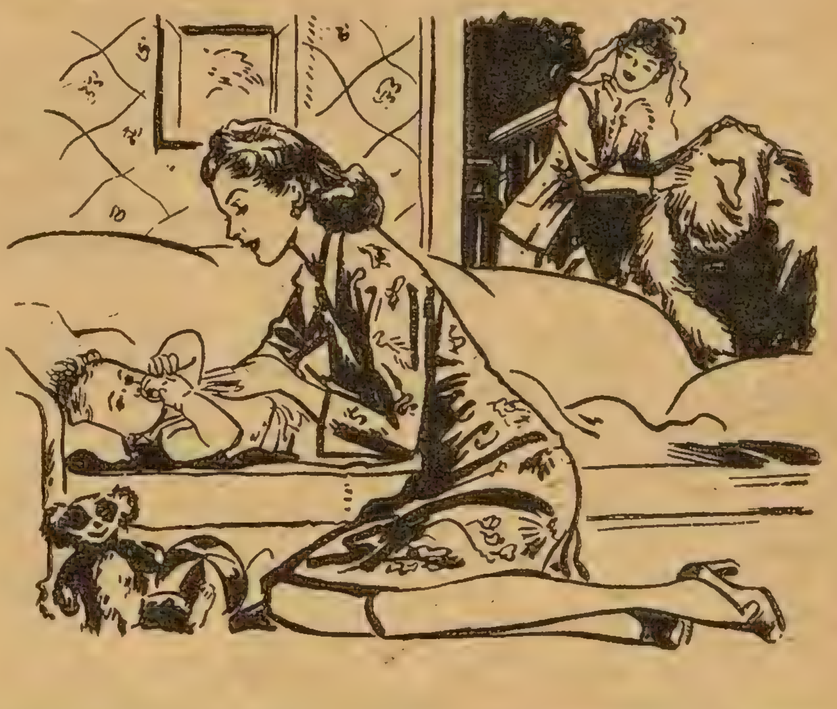
Johnny stood still and looked around the bedroom. He never seemed to breathe, and it seemed to him that after that first quick flurry of beats his heart was still and waiting, too.

Next he saw the envelope propped up against the mirror on top of a cleansing tissue box, a plain white envelope with his name written across the front of it—"Johnny"—in Gloria's rounded, childish script.

He walked across the floor, picked up the envelope, and pulled the paper out of it. One sheet covered with Gloria's childish pencil scrawl:

Dear Johnny:
I hope this don't make you feel too bad or awful sore at me. Alex and I are going to Chicago on the morning train today. Like Alex says, we don't want to hurt other folks, but we gotta think of ourselves too, we got a right to be happy too. I hope this don't make you terrible mad. I want us to always feel like we're friends. I got to think about myself once in a while. Alex thinks he can get it fixed for me to model in Chicago and get my picture in magazines, so I got to think of myself, and, like he says, me and Alex got a right to be happy too. I hope you see how it is, why I'm leaving like this. Don't try to make me come back, because I won't.

With love,
GLORIA.



Johnny read it over a couple of times until all the writing blurred and ran together in front of his eyes. He started to read the letter again, but he stopped himself and threw it onto the top of the radio.

PETEY got out of bed in midafternoon. She went about her packing with a relentless speed and efficiency, stripping her small apartment of her belongings and packing them away in a trunk and suitcases. She slipped her furs over her shoulders and carried the little suitcase and a hat out into the living room. Then she made a last tour of the rooms. On her way out of the building she stopped at the janitor's room and turned in her key. Then she caught a cab at the corner for Horton Street.

At Sally's she found the living room deserted, except for Virginia kneeling beside the davenport, holding a bottle of milk for young Beverly O'Connor.

"Hello," Virginia said without getting up. "How are you? We haven't seen anything of you in a long time. Sally was saying so just the other day."

"Hi," Petey said. "How are you? Where is everybody?"

"Well," Virginia answered her, smiling, "let's see. The kids are eating out in the kitchen, and Harold's out some place, and Sally's to the hospital, and Johnny hasn't got home from work yet."

Petey smiled too as she dropped her furs over a chair. "Just one great big happy family, huh?"

"Yup." Virginia bent over the baby lovingly. "That's right, isn't it, Beverly?"

Petey looked at Virginia curiously as she lighted a cigarette. Virginia was wearing a soft pink sweater that made her look very slight and young, and her hands were extraordinarily gentle and tender over the baby.

Petey moved about the room restlessly. "So you're baby tender now, along with bein' chief cook and bottle washer around here?"

Virginia's eyes were on the baby's face. "Well, Johnny had to have somebody to take care of the baby, you know," she said. "He's got a job now. So he offered to pay me if I would do it. I didn't know much about babies, but he and Sally showed me a lot, and we get along fine now."

Virginia tipped up the bottle and rested her chin on her hand, her eyes on the baby's face again. "I'm spoiling her," she said ruefully. "Oh, I know I shouldn't, but— Of course I know she's really too little to miss her mother, but just the same— Babies are so terrible little and helpless and—"

"Yeah," Petey said. "I guess maybe they need love to grow on, all right."

After that the room was quiet, except for the noise the baby made sucking on the rubber nipple, and the chatter of the children's voices from the kitchen.

A minute or two later the door opened quietly and Johnny O'Connor stuck his head in. He looked toward the davenport first, and his eyes warmed as he looked at the baby with Virginia bent over her.

"HI yuh, Johnny," Petey said. "I hear you're back in the harness again."

"Well, if it isn't Petey Braun! I'll say. I'm just a workin' man again. What's the news from the home front, Ginny?"

"Everything's under control," Virginia said happily.

He went over to stand beside her in front of the davenport. "Hello there, half-pint! Got a smile for the old man?"

"Pooh!" Virginia said. "You expect a girl to take time off from her supper just to smile at her father!"

He got a smile all right, but it was more Virginia's than it was his. "Will you look at that?" he mourned. "Look who's stealin' whose heart away from who!" He patted Virginia on the back affectionately as he said it. "Well, how's the hard cruel world treatin' you these days, Petey?"

"I'm not complainin'," she said briefly.

"Is that coffee I smell?" Johnny said with an exaggerated sniffing. "Ginny, could you spare another slug o' java for a broken-down old bum like me?"

"I certainly could," she said. She propped up the bottle again and hurried out to the kitchen.

Johnny said to Petey in a soft voice, "That kid's a wonder, isn't she? The way she took hold here with the baby! Why, now you'd think she'd been taking care o' babies all her life."

"Ginny's a sweet kid," Petey said. "They don't come better."

"Well, it could run in the family," Johnny said. "You know, the more I see a' you Braun girls—"

Virginia came back with a cup in one hand and a sugar bowl in the other.

"I got some orders for you, Ginny," he said as he stirred his coffee. "I gotta pay check today, which means a pay check for you, and I think that calls for celebratin'. You just ask Petey here. We'll park the offspring with Sally, and we'll go out and eat in a classy restaurant, and then, by Harry, we'll go to the movin' pitchers—that's what we'll do."

"Aw, Johnny, I'd love to," she said as if she meant it. "But Sally's not here. She oughta be here any minute; she's late now, and—"

"Go ahead, Ginny," Petey said. "I'll be here till Sally comes, and I never got my diploma for baby tender, but I guess we could make it."

"There, you, see?" he said. "No excuses."

"Well,"—Virginia's eyes were shining—"I'd have to change my dress and—"

"Uh-uh," Johnny said. "If you don't wear that pretty sweater, I won't go. Go on and get your coat. I'm a hungry man."

"You're sure you don't mind, Petey?" Virginia asked. "I think it's awful to run off like this when you come and—"

"Naw, that's all right," Petey said. "Go on now. Powder your nose and put your coat on. Don't keep a gentleman waitin'."

Virginia took a last look at the baby, dropped a kiss lightly on the top of her head. "She's pretty near asleep right now. I guess she'll be all right."

"Sure she will," Petey said. "Run along and don't worry about anything."

"Thanks, Petey," Johnny said as they went. "Let us know in time and we'll tend a baby for you sometime."

"Can I count on that?" Petey said, laughing.

The door closed, and Petey listened to their footsteps down the hall. She moved about the room restlessly, and she walked over to the davenport once and looked down at the baby. Her eyes were nearly closed. Petey looked at her a minute, and then she bent down and touched the fuzzy head gently with her hand. The baby's eyes fluttered open and she looked at Petey momentarily. Petey caught her breath a little and walked away, back to the window, her fingers nervous with another cigarette.

It was maybe five minutes after that that she heard Sally's quick light feet coming down the hall, and the door opened, and there was Sally herself in her old tweed coat.

"Well, hi!" Sally said, with her wide warm smile. "Where you been keepin' yourself? Gosh, it's good to see you. How are you?"

"I'm fine," Petey said. "How are you, honey? What's cookin' with you?"

Sally closed the door behind her and came into the room. "Look," she said, holding out a letter. Petey took it and glanced at it curiously, and then she nodded her head slowly and knowingly.

"It must have come today," Sally said. "It was on the table down there when I came in. Gosh, I don't even know where Joe is, but he ought to have this right away. I guess it's his questionnaire, all right."

"Yeah," Petey said. "It looks like the army can't get along without Joey any longer. You think he'll pass his physical all right?"

"Oh, sure," Sally said from the closet as she hung up her coat. "You know, I know Joe hates to go and all that, but just the same I'm glad about this— I think it'll be the best thing in the world for Joe."

"Could be," Petey said briefly. She walked over to the table and put the envelope down.

Sally settled into a chair comfortably, brushing at her tousled little-girl hair. "Where is everybody, anyway? Are you baby tender around here?"

"Ginny and Johnny went out to dinner and the movies to celebrate his pay check. The kids were still eating, I guess."

"Petey, are you feelin' all right?" Sally said, looking at her anxiously. "Seems like you look a little peaked. You haven't got a cold, have you? This weather so awful and everything, why, it seems like—"

"Naw, I'm fine. Looky, honey—"

"I get to talk first," Sally said. "Remember how we used to always say that when we were kids? Well, anyway, I get to talk first because I've got news. I've got a new job!"

"Well, good! Tell me."

"Well," Sally said, the grin way across her face, "it seems Sammy Toresca—he's Nick's brother—figured business is so good he needs a full-time cashier, and I'm it! That means five more a week, and it's ever so much easier than hopping tables, on your feet all day long like that, and the hours aren't any longer. He told me today, and I was tickled to death—honest."

"Aw, swell, honey," Petey said. "I'm awfully glad."

"Yeah; it sure is gonna help a lot." Sally sighed.

PETEY looked at her hard for a moment. "You was at the hospital today, huh? How's everything?"

Sally took a deep breath and lifted her chin. "Well, I didn't see Roy, of course, but I talked to the doctor. You know, Roy had kind of a setback. But he's coming along. It's awful slow business. It's just gonna take a little longer than we planned, but—"

"Honey, you're young. You've got to think about yourself. You've got a life of your own to live, and it isn't fair to you, going on like this. I don't think Roy's ever going to be any better. I don't think that you do either, way down underneath, do you?"

"Petey, don't say it, please," Sally said. Her eyes were very wide and her lips unsteady. "Of course I think he's gonna get better. I know he is. Why, if I didn't think that Roy was gonna get better and come home here and things be like they used to, why, I—I just couldn't go on, that's all! I've got to think that or I couldn't stand it! It's—it's—what I live by!"

Petey smiled suddenly, and shook the hair back on her shoulders, her eyes affectionate on Sally's face. "Aw, I know, Sally. I shouldn't have said that, should I?"

Petey hesitated for just a little, then she said, "Looky, dear. I'm no good at saying good-by. I hardly ever do it. But I couldn't leave without tellin' you—"

"Petey!" There was consternation on Sally's face.

Petey nodded. "Yeah. I'm all packed and everything. I'm gonna catch a train after the show tonight."

"Oh, gosh! But— Why, where you going?"

Petey smiled. "Well, I can't really say. I won't know till I come to buy the ticket. I gotta hunch maybe Chicago. I haven't been in Chicago in a long time."

"But, Petey, why? I thought maybe you'd sort o' settle down here, for a while. Why. . ."

"Yeah, I know," Petey said. "Honey, I just got train whistles in my ears, I guess."

"Well, I don't like it." Sally was close to tears. "Petey, what makes you! Always movin' like this! Why, it's—it's—no kind of a real life at all."

"I'll write as soon as I get located," Petey said steadily. "Honey, I hate to bail out on you—honest, I do. I know the spot you're in, and I want to help. As soon as I get located some place, why, I'll send you—"

"It isn't that," Sally said indignantly. "You've helped me a lot and it's terribly sweet of you, but it isn't—isn't—money—I'm thinking about. I'm thinking about you! Petey, don't go like this. It isn't right for you. Maybe it's a lot of fun now, but in a few years what are you going to have?"

Petey laughed her deep laughter. "I know—get married and settle down and have a family! Sally, honey, I love you!"

"No, now don't laugh at me!" Sally said.

Petey caught up her furs from the chair. "No more lectures," she said cheerfully. "And if we don't lecture we're gonna start snivelin', so I'm gonna run. I'm gonna be all right—don't worry about me. And you'll have a letter from me in just a few days. This time I won't stay away for so long. I promise, cross my heart. You take care of yourself, won't you? Don't work too hard, and write sometimes, and if you ever get in a spot, no matter what it is, you holler loud, won't you, and I'll be right here before you know it. No, don't get up—and say good-by to everybody for me, huh?"

Petey stooped and kissed Sally and hugged her tight. "Be good, honey, and—keep 'em flying, huh?"

The next moment she was gone, the door banging behind her.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

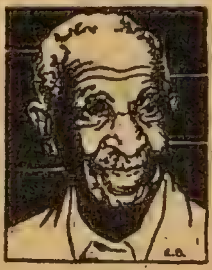
IN 1865, in Missouri, a band of raiders swept up to a Negro cabin and carried off a slave mother who had been trying to comfort her sick infant. The mother was never heard from again. The baby was later found by a bushwhacker and returned to the mother's owner, Moses Carver, who with his wife, Susan, brought up the sickly child.

The child was George Washington Carver, whose biography makes the kind of exciting and inspirational reading of which we can be justly boastful in America. It is the story of a man who was born a slave and lived not only to walk with the great of the earth, but to enjoy the more satisfying knowledge that his life and works had contributed immeasurably to the greatness of his country. Among many other honors, his was the unique distinction of being the only man in all history who, born into slavery, became a Fellow of the Royal Society of London.

George Washington Carver: An American Biography, by Rackham Holt (Doubleday, Doran and Co., New York. $3.50) is at once an engaging and factual history of the man and his pre-eminently useful career.

From childhood George Carver displayed an interest and a concern for all growing things. At an age when most children just begin to learn to play, little George was nursing plants and knew how to protect his favorite begonia from the Ozarks winter.

He had a way with plants all his life, and with people, too. He was as unfailingly courteous as he was unflaggingly interested in what lay just beyond his present knowledge. And he pushed the borders of his own knowledge further and further, until a whole world was surprised by the things this man discovered.



George Washington Carver

Because he wanted to know, he schooled himself, he worked his way through high school and then through college, and in time Booker T. Washington brought him to Tuskegee to teach. Here he worked unceasingly until his death.

It was from Tuskegee that his fame spread throughout the world. And to Tuskegee to consult Carver came the great and little from far and near: the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States; farmer neighbors with crop problems; and once an American from Gandhi's ashrama to learn from Dr. Carver about improving the Indian diet by use of peanuts, vegetables, and nuts grown in India.

George Carver became the friend of Theodore Roosevelt, the intellectual companion of Henry Ford, with whom he had a kinship of invention and the ability to transform "things" into useful products. It was Carver who, without thought of profit—indeed heedless of payment pressed upon him—created a whole new world of useful products. From the peanut plant alone he developed a "dozen beverages, mixed pickles, sauces, meal, instant and dry coffee, lard, salve, bleach, tan remover, wood filler, washing powder, metal polish, paper, ink, plastics, shaving cream, rubbing oil, linoleum, shampoo, axle grease, synthetic rubber."

Of particular interest to us now is the Carver statement that if we were to lose every vegetable except the peanut and the sweet potato, we could live on these alone and be perfectly hearty, and we would have a perfectly balanced ration for man and animals.

The fascination of this book is the man himself, the fascination of getting to know a truly great person. Amid all the oratorical fireworks glittering around us today, I can recommend nothing that so well demonstrates the truth and the living quality of the American Dream than Dr. George Washington Carver as he lives in these pages.

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

Mascha and her family are helpless to stop the Nazis from taking her father as hostage.

Mascha hopes to save her father from death by making Svoboda admit he is the assassin.

Now aware of the importance of their work, Mascha helps Svoboda rescue their leader.

BY HARRIET GOULD

HANGMEN ALSO DIE

HANGMEN ALSO DIE was much more than just another movie to its producer, Arnold Pressburger, and his staff of technicians. For Arnold Pressburger is a Czech and his art director, music director, and writers are either Czech or Austrian and have suffered under the Nazi boot.

Their personal hatred of the Nazis permeates every scene in this fiercely dramatic movie about the assassination of the late and unlamented Nazi, Heydrich the Hangman (who died an inglorious death in Prague in June, 1942). Every detail of the horrors of Fascism is hammered home with a drive that will leave audiences limp and helpless in their chairs at the end of the picture. The story of the assassination and the blood bath it precipitated begins with the attempted getaway of the man appointed by the Underground to be Heydrich's killer—a minor medico named Dr. Svoboda (Brian Donlevy). When his escape plans go awry, he is forced to stay at the home of Professor Novotny (Walter Brennan) and his daughter Mascha (Anna Lee), who suspect that he is the assassin, yet ask no questions.

But when Mascha's father is taken as a hostage because the "killer" has not been found, Mascha pleads with Svoboda to give himself up. When he refuses, she goes to the Gestapo—hoping to save her father. Almost too late, she realizes that Svoboda is not just one man—but a symbol of freedom for the entire country.

The rest of the film is concerned with the Gestapo's hunt for the man who killed Heydrich, and a tense and exciting chase it is, with a finish that is both gratifying and logical.

The cast of this relentless anti-Fascist film is uniformly excellent—with special credit to Alex Granach, who plays the Gestapo detective with a lustiness that is admirable; and Gene Lockhart as the slimy Quisling who outsmarts himself.

Hangmen Also Die is based largely on fact. Edward Benes and Jan Masaryk, leaders of the Czech government in exile, followed the production with great interest and made their secret files available to the authors—who used them to good advantage.

(United Artists.)

MICKEY ROONEY

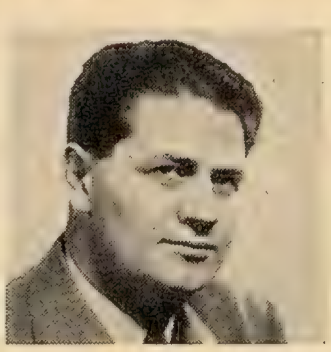
GLORIA JEAN

DONALD O'CONNOR

CURRENT FILM FARE

FILM	GIST	LIBERTY SAID:
AIR FORCE (Warners) **John Garfield, Harry Carey**	**_Drama_ (pictorial logbook of a Flying Fortress in the Philippines, December, 1941).**	**A really good picture . . . exciting, fast-moving . . . authentic. (2-20-43)**
ASSIGNMENT IN BRITTANY (M-G-M) **Pierre Aumont, Richard Whorf, Margaret Wycherly**	**_Thriller_ (a British spy doubles for a French traitor and unearths Nazi schemes).**	**Suspense-filled . . . exciting sequences . . . excellent cast. (4-17-43)**
CABIN IN THE SKY (M-G-M) **Ethel Waters, Lena Horne, "Rochester" Anderson**	**_Musical fantasy_ (Petunia tries to keep Little Joe away from the clutches of the devil and Georgia Brown).**	**Lighthearted fantasy . . . slow in spots, but has much to offer . . . lovely music and Ethel Waters' singing make picture worth seeing. (4-3-43)**
DESERT VICTORY **British Army Film Unit. Released through 20th-Fox**	**_Documentary film_ (a record of the Eighth Army's victorious drive against Rommel last summer).**	**Its photography and drama put most Hollywood productions to shame . . . packed with indelible moments. (5-1-43)**
EDGE OF DARKNESS (Warners) **Errol Flynn, Ann Sheridan, Judith Anderson**	**_Drama_ (a Norwegian fishing village rises in revolt against Nazi tyranny).**	**Its theme does not suffer by repetition . . . extraordinary collection of acting talent. (4-17-43)**
FLIGHT FOR FREEDOM (RKO) **Rosalind Russell, Fred MacMurray, Herbert Marshall**	**_Aviation romance_ (an aviatrix—reminiscent of Amelia Earhart—camouflages a naval mission as a flight around the world).**	**It has all the elements that make for an entertaining movie . . . fast-moving . . . exciting . . . see it. (3-27-43)**
FOREVER AND A DAY (RKO) **All-star cast**	**_Drama_ (the saga of an English house and its inhabitants from 1804 to 1941).**	**Actors, writers, directors donated talents, and proceeds go to war charities . . . characterizations are gems. (4-10-43)**
HELLO, FRISCO, HELLO (20th-Fox) **Alice Faye, John Payne, Jack Oakie, June Havoc**	**_Musical_ (the old-fashioned two-couple vaudeville team sing and dance along Frisco's Barbary Coast).**	**Fine technicolor . . . lots of old vaudeville ballads . . . perfect escapist movie for an off night. (4-24-43)**
HITLER'S CHILDREN (RKO) **Bonita Granville, Otto Kruger, Tim Holt**	**_Drama_ (the revolt of an American-born girl in Germany against Nazi "education").**	**Vivid portrayal . . . story handled with restraint that enhances the horror. (2-13-43)**
ONE DAY OF WAR (March of Time)	**_Documentary film_ (stirring kaleidoscope of a typical day of war in Soviet Russia).**	**Most amazing war film ever made . . . awful and startling in its simplicity. (3-6-43)**
REAP THE WILD WIND (Paramount) **Paulette Goddard, Ray Milland, and John Wayne**	**_Melodrama_ (the romances of the seagoing daughter of a salvage skipper in the days of sailing ships and pirates)**	**A De Mille super-spectacle full of excitement, color, and comedy . . . a fabulous historical show rather than co-ordinated artistic achievement. (4-11-42)**
SALUDOS AMIGOS (Disney-RKO) **Donald Duck, Goofy**	**_Cartoon feature_ (the Disney menagerie takes over South America and makes some new friends).**	**Very amusing dose of hemispheric neighborliness . . . magnificent color. (1-16-43)**
THE AMAZING MRS. HOLLIDAY (Universal) **Deanna Durbin, Edmond O'Brien**	**_Comic melodrama_ (Deanna pretends she's a widow to get refugee kids into the country—then falls in love).**	**Conclusive and delightful evidence that Deanna Durbin has really grown up. (3-20-43)**
THE DESPERADOS (Columbia) **Randolph Scott, Glenn Ford, Claire Trevor**	**_Western_ (familiar triangle of the sheriff, the friend wrongly accused of robbery, and the gal).**	**Slick production of an old formula . . . superb technicolor . . . not just another Western. (5-1-43)**
THE HARD WAY (Warners) **Ida Lupino, Joan Leslie**	**_Drama_ (a ruthless girl discovers she can run her sister's life in the theater but not out of it).**	**Relentless character story . . . Lupino gives one of her best bitter, uncompromising performances. (11-14-42)**
THE HUMAN COMEDY (M-G-M) **Mickey Rooney, Fay Bainter, Frank Morgan**	**_Homey drama_ (three days in the life of the Macauleys of Ithaca as seen by Saroyan).**	**Delightful and heart-warming film . . . no real plot, but each scene a gem . . . direction excellent. (4-24-43)**
THE IMMORTAL SERGEANT (20th-Fox) **Henry Fonda, Maureen O'Hara**	**_War drama_ (inspired by the memory of his superior, a corporal guides a British patrol through Libya).**	**Compact, hard-driving movie . . . fine performances. (2-20-43)**
THE OX BOW INCIDENT (20th-Fox) **Henry Fonda, Dana Andrews, Frank Conroy**	**_Drama_ (mob hysteria culminates in the lynching of three innocent men).**	**An exciting, intelligent, relentless movie . . . the implications leave you limp . . . tight direction . . . finely drawn characters. (5-1-43)**

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES



AN OKLAHOMAN, Noel Houston left his native heath to settle down in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and write plays. Here he wrote a prize-winning drama, According to Law, and received two Rockefeller fellowships, as well as a Dramatists' Guild fellowship. Hollywood came after him, but he turned his back on the temptation. He preferred to spend his time helping to produce The Lost Colony, which was performed on Roanoke Island. It was this region that gave him the background for Lantern on the Beach in this issue.

WHILE THE GREAT statesmen of the United Nations express their visions of the postwar world, the scientists, industrialists, and designers are getting busy on transforming these concepts into practical reality, and Morris Markey, beginning with his Postwar Living in this issue, is going to give us his firsthand report on the progress made to establish the brave new world ahead of us. Keep watching for these fascinating revelations.

OF HIMSELF, JOEL REEVE says: "Three hundred years of backwoods farmers finally produced a roamer. An early session in newspaper business injected printer's ink. To this add a consuming curiosity about what makes people tick, which keeps the pot a-boiling." He and his wife go up and down the country mingling with all kinds of humans, getting them to talk, observing their ways. They enjoy their literary vagabondage. "It's a good life," concludes Joel.

THE EDITORS

LANTERN ON THE BEACH

Continued from Page 19

other, about every story he ever knew.

He coughed again, uneasily. "Course now, you know, Eddie, all of us are seafarin' folk, and we know what the sea is like off here, all the way from Kill Devil Hills to Hatteras. Turn yer back on it a minute and it'll git ya. We know that, and we're prepared for it, and we take it like men if our time comes. Ain't that right?"

Eddie didn't say anything. Old Man Si got up and found two cups and poured coffee. He set a cup on the stool beside Eddie. He held his cup in both hands and took a deep draught.

"Pretty good coffee, boy. Try some."

Eddie's forehead was drawn in a frown. He was trying to figure out something.

"A man couldn't count the shipwrecks off this coast, all the way back to Spanish galleons. Graveyard of the Atlantic, these shoals is called," Old Man Si added, talking gently. "Nearly ever'body along here is descended somehow from shipwrecked sailors. You know that."

EDDIE nodded. He spoke slowly, thinking out loud: "It wasn't the sea that done it to Harvey, Mr. Denning. It was that thing out there, layin' out there waitin' to kill our folks. Like Harvey said, killin' right in our own front yard."

"You're right about that, Eddie."

"If I was only older, I could be flyin' a plane, or I could be on a destroyer, and I could sink that submarine."

"You'll be older one of these days, and then you can do it."

"But not soon enough, Mr. Denning. The sub that got Harvey will be gone."

"I reckon it's gone now."

"Do you think it is?"

Old Man Si reconsidered.

"Well, no, I don't. I figure, since the flyin' lads didn't give any indication they got it, it's still hangin' around out there some'eres. It's got four ships round here in three days, and it ain't likely to leave while the huntin's so good."

"That sub just can't be let to get any more, Mr. Denning," said Eddie earnestly. "It just can't!"

Old Man Si shook his head.

"And it's got to pay for what it did to my brother." He clenched his fists. "There ought to be a way I could do it. I could get in a boat and go out there and I . . ."

Famous Highs by C.A. Voight

28,100' high!

ONLY 4 MEN EVER REACHED THAT PEAK IN MOUNTAIN CLIMBING— BUT THOUSANDS HAVE REACHED A NEW PEAK IN WHISKEY ENJOYMENT. TASTE THE REASON—TASTE THE GREATER RICHNESS, THE EXQUISITE SMOOTHNESS OF TODAY'S TEN HIGH!

I ACTUALLY SAW IT THAT TIME BILL —

Streamline high!

THE WORLD'S FASTEST TRAIN ATTAINED AN AVERAGE SPEED OF 84 MILES AN HOUR OVER 56.6 MILES— A RECORD THAT'S NEVER BEEN EQUALLED BY ANY OTHER SCHEDULED TRAIN RUN. AND NO WHISKEY'S EVER EQUALLED THE SMOOTHNESS OF TEN HIGH.

..and Ten High!

A new high in whiskey smoothness!

Hiram Walker's
TEN
HIGH

Please be patient. If your store or tavern is temporarily out of TEN HIGH *there are two reasons: (1) Since all distilleries are now making war alcohol instead of whiskey, the available supply of* TEN HIGH *is on quota "for the duration." (2) Railways must give war materials and food the right of way, so your dealer's shipment of* TEN HIGH *may sometimes be delayed.*

This Straight Bourbon Whiskey is 4 years old. 86 proof. Hiram Walker & Sons Inc., Peoria, Ill.

"Now, we might as well be sensible, Eddie," Old Man Si interrupted.

Eddie scowled bitterly. Being with the gentle old man had dried his tears. In the place of sorrow was a frustrated anger that he could not be his brother's avenger. Just being twelve years old—that was the trouble.

Old Man Si didn't know what to say, except to fall back on his stories. He cleared his throat.

"Speakin' of how people have to be brave— Now, when Sir Walter Raleigh's folks come sailin' in to Roanoke Island, they was in three boats that wa'n't much bigger than lifeboats on a passenger liner of today. They had a hard time, but Virginia Dare was born the first year, and—"

"Yes, sir; I know about that," said Eddie.

Old Man Si stopped and thought a moment. He beat off on another tack.

"I REMEMBER the night the Northeastern run aground off Diamond Shoals. That was a storm, if ever there was one. The Buxton lads trundled their boats down to the shore, and one of the men said to old Captain Etheridge, 'Ain't no use goin' out there, cap'n—we'll never come back.' And old Captain Etheridge, his whiskers blowin' in the gale, he hollered back—"

Eddie, staring out the door, broke in automatically: "He hollered, 'The regulations don't say a damn thing about comin' back; they just say we got to go.' "

Old Man Si was confused. "Yep, that's right. That's what he said. That's the kind of men they used to produce along here."

Neither of them spoke for a few minutes. Then Old Man Si sniffed and cocked an eye out the window. The look confirmed what his nose had told him. A change in the weather coming. That reminded him of something to tell Eddie. He leaned back in his chair, hitched his thumbs in his belt, and chuckled.

"Now the way Nags Head got its name is an interestin' thing, Eddie. Nags Head. Back there a century or more ago, they was land pirates along here and—"

"Yes, sir," said Eddie respectfully. "I know about that."

Old Man Si frowned at the dirty dishes on the table. Just wasn't no way he could comfort the boy, looked like.

Eddie sighed and got up. "I guess I'd better go home," he said.

As Eddie rode slowly up the beach in the failing light, he noticed the wind had shifted to the northeast and was rising. Whitecaps were breaking to the horizon and heavy gray clouds were gathering out at sea.

Except for the scurrying fiddler crabs, the beach was empty where the crowd had gathered and Harvey Daniel had died. The ocean rapidly erases all signs of its tragedies. Perhaps that's so it can lull even the wariest, and strike them quick and hard just when they feel surest of themselves.

When Eddie got home, he learned Harvey's body had been taken to Manteo. His mother stood with her back to him at the kerosene stove, turning chops in a sputtering frying pan. His father, a big man, with the cuffs of his frayed blue shirt rolled halfway to his elbows, sat at the table, holding his head in his mottled red hands. The room was gray, almost dark.

"Hang the blackouts so I can turn on the light, Eddie," his mother said calmly.

Eddie went into each of the four rooms and fitted frames covered with heavy tar paper into all except the landward windows. He fastened them there with screen hooks.

When he had finished, his mother turned on the bulb that hung from the center of the kitchen. The light beat down on his father's head, turning his gray hair silvery; but his face, cupped in his hands, was in shadow. Eddie wondered if he was crying. He wanted to run to him and put his head in his lap. But he knew he was too old for that.

Suddenly his father smote the table with both fists and lunged up from the table. He faced the east window as if he were looking right through the blackout frame out to where Harvey's tanker had been torpedoed. He cried out in a voice which frightened Eddie, it was so agonized and strange.

Eddie's mother went to his father and put an arm around his waist. "Don't, Mark," she begged.

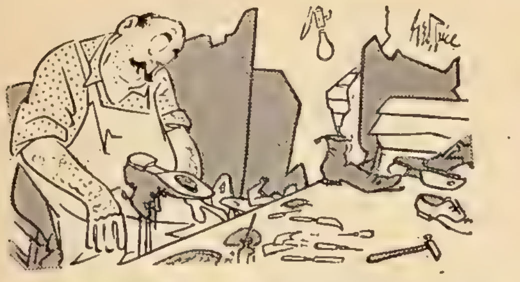
"We're—I— There ain't nothin' I can do," he groaned.

EDDIE had never seen his father writhe under strong emotion before. He felt stifled. "We ain't the men we used to be," his father went on. "There was a time when the men on Nags Head knew what to do."

Eddie stood stunned, a great white sheet of lightning in his brain, blinded by the revelation which had struck him. "A time when the men on Nags Head knew what to do." And he heard Old Man Si Denning's voice, as if the old man stood behind him, whispering in his ear, "An interestin' thing—the way Nags Head got its name." And somehow Harvey's black, burnt face was mixed up in it. "Got old Tuney with you. A good—" Of course! Of course!

He didn't think out a plan step by step. He didn't have to. The whole plan was there, sprung to full life

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S
FICTIONARY *(Unabashed)*



LEATHERGY: A cobbler with spring fever.

S'DEATHOSCOPE: When the doctor listens and can't hear anything.

GALCONY: Juliet.

COMMISTERATION: Feeling sorry for men.

SCHOONERVERSITY: Training ship for young men-signs.

NAHZLE: A hose without a nose.

DRABBIT: A dull brown bunny.

CROWSHADE: Lace made with black silk.

CLOUTFIT: A prizefighter's parapher-nail-you.

BARKITECT: The guy who builds the doghouse you're in.

in an inspired instant, without Eddie's having to think about it at all.

The first spatter of the rising nor'easter's rain rattled across the roof like a ruffle of drums sounding marching orders. Eddie's parents' backs were to him. He grabbed the box of matches from the stove and scooted out the landward door.

Pitch-blackness had plunged over the Banks. The rain fell in sheets as he raced through the soft sand to Tuney's shed. Two hundred yards away the mighty, frantic surf spilled itself across the beach with the rumbling roar of an endless freight train.

Eddie bumped into the shed, then felt for the door latch. As he went inside, Tuney whinnied in fear until Eddie called to him reassuringly. In the light of a match, the boy and the pony looked at each other, their eyes shining with excitement.

"Steady, fella," said Eddie. "We've got work to do."

HE took a big rusty lantern from the wall. Before the match flickered out, he examined the wick. Then, in the dark, he unscrewed the cap and thrust a finger into the container to make certain it was filled with kerosene.

He got down Tuney's bridle and put it on by memory, while the pony trembled in spite of comforting words. He struck another match. In a corner he found a piece of rope five feet long.

Once outside, Eddie leaped to Tuney's back, holding the unlighted lantern and rope in his right hand. The box of matches he had stuffed inside his shirt. He poked Tuney in the ribs with his bare heels. They crossed the black-top, swished through the grass of the flat, and Tuney unwillingly began to trudge up the dune.

When they reached the ridge, they were exposed to the full force of the wind and rain. Eddie slid down. He led Tuney a little way down the opposite side to comparative quiet. There he struck match after match until he had the lantern going. Carefully he adjusted the wick to give maximum light. It threw back the darkness, startling Tuney.

Quickly Eddie looped the rope around Tuney's neck, then tied the lantern so that it hung like a brilliant pendant. Tuney didn't like it, but submitted when Eddie spoke sternly.

"Your ancestors did it," he argued. "Right on these same dunes. And you can do it, too."

Doggedly, leaning into the sweeping rain, Eddie began leading Tuney north along the backbone of the dune, parallel to the sea.

"Help make this do it, Harvey,"

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26th King George's Own Light Cavalry
(Indian Army)
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HONOURS OF
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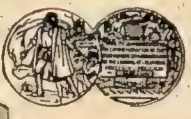

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he muttered pleadingly. "This has got to do it." And somehow he felt that Harvey really was looking down on them, nodding approval.

Eighteen minutes later a coastguardsman, happening to look landward from his beach lookout, saw the light back there. Horrified, he ran to report to his superior. Together they called Captain Knight from his house.

The shouting brought guardsmen from their houses in the station area. All stared toward the oddly bobbing light which moved northward relentlessly, seemingly suspended in space not far above the ground.

"Arm yourselves and assemble here," commanded Captain Knight. When the men returned, he said, "We'll move in a body until I give orders to spread fanwise."

They shoved off toward the dunes, stumbling in the darkness.

THE coastguardsmen were not the only persons to see the oddly moving light. Out at sea, beneath the hard-running waves, one Korvettenkapitän Clemens von Schilling peered intently into his periscope. He had picked up the light almost from the beginning, and he licked his thin lips nervously.

"Our information was right," he muttered to the lieutenant standing beside him. "That is our final tanker."

He chuckled harshly. "A good friend, whether he knows it or not, aboard there shows a light."

He rasped out terse orders: a run in.

"But—" remonstrated his navigator. "Without my sonic depth finder? *Es ist zerbrochen.* What of reefs and shoals?"

The Korvettenkapitän whirled. Exhaustion lined his face. He had been in the Atlantic more than eight weeks. His whole crew was worn out, inefficient. Two of the depth charges dropped by the planes that afternoon had nearly done for the sub. She was leaking. It was true, as the navigator said, that her delicate sonic devices had been knocked out. But the Nazi had two torpedoes left and he saw a new prey before his periscope.

"You heard my order!" he screamed. "That tanker is sailing safe, no? We are outside her, *ja?*"

"But—" the navigator whined. He got no further.

The Korvettenkapitän lashed out a hard fist to the navigator's jaw, and he went down. Breathing heavily, the Nazi glared into the faces of his crew. The white-faced men dropped their weary eyes, said nothing.

Suddenly Korvettenkapitän Clemens von Schilling felt a slow wave of fright mounting in his trembling body. He thought of home, his family, the little beer cellar at the corner. Cursing his *Heimweh* and his terror, he stood quivering beside the periscope, torn between lust for another kill and the whispering voice inside which cautioned him to start now for Deutschland.

"No particular message—just my overwhelming desire for cleanliness, sir."

EDDIE and Tuney had gone more than a mile when black figures leaped out of the darkness from all directions. "Put up your hands!"

Eddie looked into the barrels of rifles. "Gee whiz!" he gasped.

"Why," exclaimed a guardsman, "it's only Eddie Daniel!"

"Who's with you, Eddie?" demanded Captain Knight.

"Gosh," said Eddie, "nobody but Tuney."

"Douse that light."

Two guardsmen extinguished it. On Captain Knight's orders, two more took Eddie by the arms. They went down the dune, Eddie kicking and protesting.

"I can't understand it, Eddie," said Captain Knight. "I just can't. Don't you know what it looks like—showing a light out to sea? Aiding the enemy!"

"I wasn't!" said Eddie, outraged. "I was trying to get it. The sub that killed Harvey."

"Ha!" said Captain Knight.

"If you had let me alone— You know how Nags Head got its name, don't you?"

"Of course. But this is no time for—"

"That's what I was doin'. The way land pirates along here used to do. The way they would put a lantern around an old nag's neck and walk her along the dunes on a stormy night. You know, Captain Knight. A ship out to sea would think it was another vessel sailing safe closer in, and it would come in closer, too, and pile up on the shoals. Then next day, when everybody had drowned and the storm gone down—gosh, you know!—the land pirates would row out and loot the ship. Gosh, Captain Knight—"

"Now let me get this straight."

"That's what I was doin'."

The alarm about the light had spread, and a good many people were waiting outside the station. At first the Bankers couldn't believe what Eddie had been trying to do. Then the full absurdity of one small boy, one Banks pony, and one rusty lantern trying to capture a great modern submarine began to soak in. They roared with laughter.

Eddie stood there in the dark circle of people, his own people, feeling more and more miserable. The rain beat down on him, but they were not all raindrops that coursed down his cheeks. He had thought he was doing a wonderful thing. Now he, too, saw how foolish he had been. He wanted to run somewhere and hide and never look anybody in the face again.

"Why, boy," said Captain Knight, "it's true land pirates wrecked many a ship doing exactly what you were doing; but these U-boats aren't old-timey sailing vessels."

Eddie wished he could explain he hadn't thought of that, hadn't thought at all—that it had been an inspiration, a flashing command, like a voice from heaven, like a voice from his brother Harvey.

A rough arm fell around his shoulder. He started to pull away. Then Old Man Si's voice said, "It's all right, Eddie." Old Man Si was there to see his misery, too. But the old man was gentle and understanding. Eddie snuggled close to the wet rubber slicker. Together they walked away in the darkness toward Eddie's house.

THE boy felt an added twinge. This disgrace would be piled on his parents' sorrow.

"Imagine," he heard Jeff Beesum saying to the crowd—"imagine anybody being as dumb as that Eddie Daniel."

"Now that's enough," broke in Captain Knight sharply. He had a whiplash voice when he chose to snap it. "Eddie was trying to help his country—that's plain. Whatever else, he showed initiative and patriotism."

Everybody fell silent, feeling sheepish now for being grown-ups laughing at a small boy who had done his best to avenge his brother and save the lives of others of his countrymen. Especially they felt sheepish because the great-granddaddies of several of those present had made a dangerous living using Eddie's scheme, and they had been men whom you wouldn't have dared to laugh at.

Captain Knight might have said more, but instead he grunted. For at that moment a red flare burst in the air not far off shore.

The flare had hardly reached its full brilliance before the captain was calling out orders. The guardsmen sprang into smooth, teamed action, as if pieces of a watch had suddenly all leaped into place and the watch started ticking.

"What is it, Mr. Si?" cried Eddie. "What is it?"

"Maybe it's—" shouted Old Man Si, and added fervently, "Oh, God, let it be!"

The horizontal beams of mobile searchlights darted over the angry whitecaps, then converged swiftly on one point.

Not more than six hundred yards out, the after half of a submarine angled out of the sea, its stern rocking and shuddering before the onslaught. Crawling aft, hanging on desperately, were half a dozen men.

NEXT morning—a clear, bright morning with a sea still running over the wrecked submarine, but the sky a clean and burnished blue—Eddie, his parents, and Tuney bringing up the rear trudged through the sand to the Nags Head Station.

This time, when Eddie hove in sight, everybody clapped and cheered. Eddie grinned. His father found his mother's hand and squeezed it, and her lip trembled with pride.

Lined up at the foot of the porch steps were six Nazis. A navy truck waited to take them to Norfolk.

Old Captain Knight, taking his pipe from his mouth, said to the Nazi commander, "Well, here's the boy and his pony that done it, like I told you. Just a regular American boy, Eddie is. We're going to get him a medal."

The Nazi glared at Eddie. He took a quick step forward and raised his arm to strike Eddie down.

Before anybody could move, Tuney, that old hero, extended his long neck and sank his teeth into the seat of the Nazi's pants.

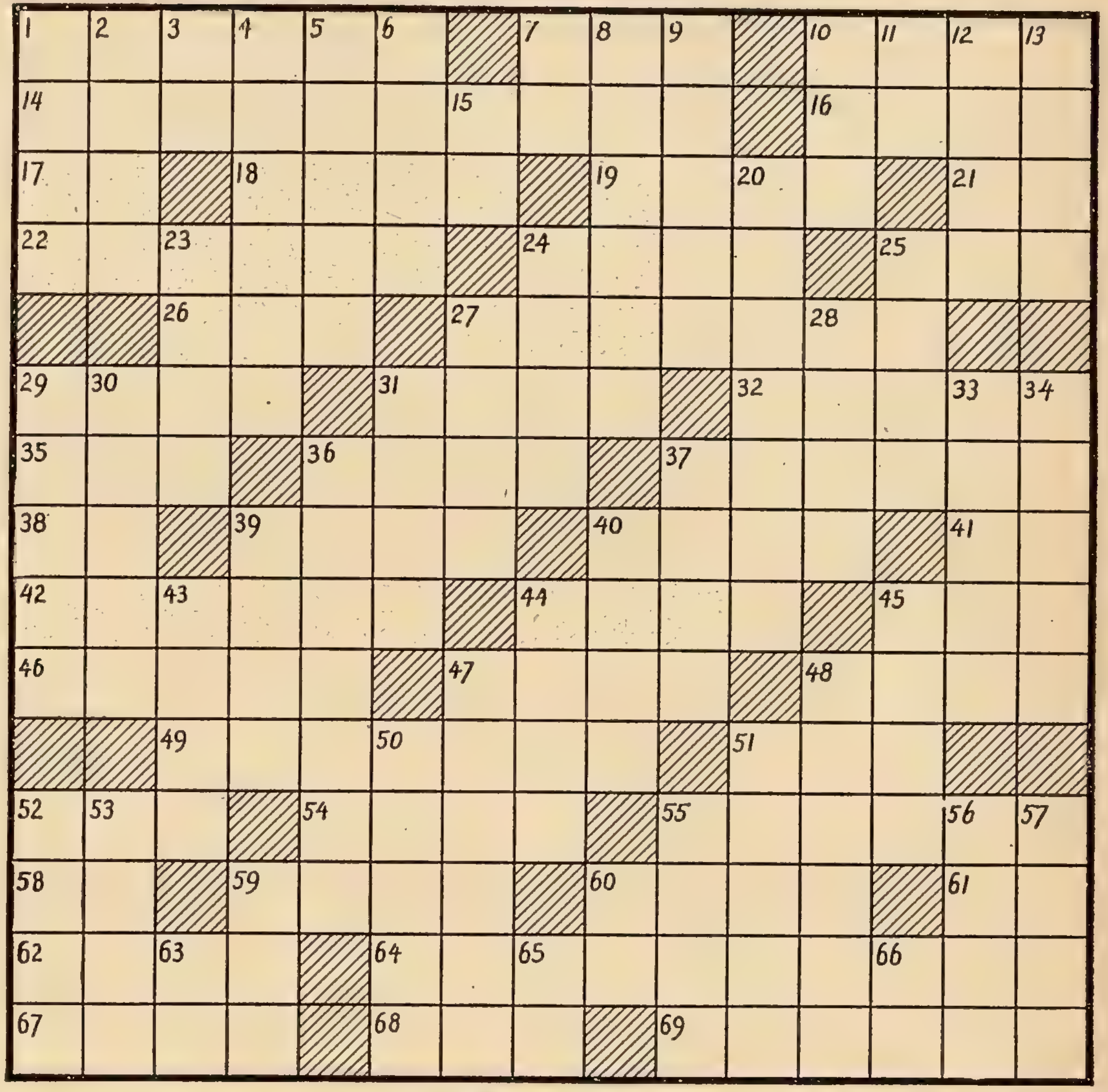
Korvettenkapitän Clemens von Schilling jumped into the air, and his upraised arm gave a Nazi salute as he hollered "Heil Hitler!" at the top of his voice.

"Well," drawled Old Man Si, "they wanted total war. Man and boy, we'll hit 'em and bite 'em with everything we've got! Eh, Eddie?"

THE END

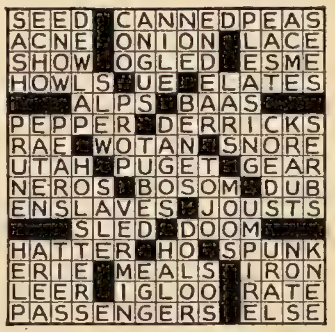
COCKEYED CROSSWORDS

BY TED SHANE



HORIZONTAL

1 Victim in the Lousy Murder Case
7 First meal of the day
10 Beverage report
14 If Age could but tell it, and Youth would but listen
16 It has banks in Canada and the United States
17 Wot the Gov. of N. Y. uuuu 2 b
18 Two wonderful ways to hold your women
19 Booze joint with glamour
21 After this, you see dough
22 Flashes in the pan
24 Jupiter sat on the top o' the world; she sat on Jupe
25 Blacked out inside
26 Shane on him!
27 They can be removed with a knife and fork, if you know how
29 Main reason for the beverage report
31 What high-minded Nazis got out of Paris
32 Chop chassis
35 What crooks take things on
36 That Jap sea-captain feeling
37 The gal who married your soldier boy friend (Shane spelling)
38 Acrimonious Rufflepinchers (abbr.)
39 Only thing you can't recognize about jive music
40 Bang-bang!
41 Where it takes pull to get anywhere, including a Pullman (abbr.)
42 Attachment for leading husbands about (fem.)
44 Victim of the double-X
45 Immortal first name
46 It should be phosphorescent for night traveling
47 Ball-bearing objects used for driving
48 Grate, isn't it?
49 International tight-rope walker
51 Look things over carefully
52 Wal, if 'tain't old Newt ag'in! (archaic)


SEED■CANNEDPEAS
ACNE■ONION■LACE
SHOW■OGLED■ESME
HOWLS■UE■ELATES
■■■ALPS■BAAS■■■
PEPPER■DERRICKS
RAE■WOTAN■SNORE
UTAH■PUGET■GEAR
NEROS■BOSOM■DUB
ENSLAVES■JOUSTS
■■■SLED■DOOM■■■
HATTER■HO■SPUNK
ERIE■MEALS■IRON
LEER■IGLOO■RATE
PASSENGERS■ELSE

April 24 answer

54 Kind of instrument used by blasters for puncturing eardrums
55 Heavenly zippers
58 Hi! (abbr.)
59 Something you have at your fingertips but don't give a poof! for
60 Acres of headaches
61 'Lo!
62 Consort of a queenk
64 Chicago atomizer (two words)
67 K. O. for real
68 Society of Nostril Oscillators (abbr.)
69 Pairs of lovely coalironandwater

VERTICAL

1 Radical members of the League
2 Questionable thing about Yale (abbr.)
3 Artificial Perspiration (abbr.)
4 Wild West ace concealer
5 Bonered
6 Wheels within wheels
7 Prepozish
8 What Englishmen speak English with
9 Most convincing female argument (pl.)
10 A little whiz-z-z
11 Abraham's place in Xwords
12 Lovable, like a certain rock of song
13 Clang the clanger
15 Esthetic Sergeants (abbr.)
20 It's a flop
23 Doodad among a lot of other doodads
24 Only place Johnny never hangs his coat
25 That goddess is in again!
27 Difference between a $2 and $2,000 violin
28 One thing we can't afford to do—and won't
29 Burp with authority
30 The dirt's on this
31 Very powerful organ around Washington
33 In their hands violins become dangerous weapons
34 Sweet essence of slush
36 Red coat, very warm, fits right on your skin
37 They fill slacks to overflowing (fem.)
39 We traded space with Japan for this
40 Burner juice (rare)
43 They call him Shorty
44 Best kind of Nazi
45 Street of sighs
47 Crack a nut and take a peck in at the kernel—if any
48 Only guy who can run faster than an Italian in Tunisia
50 They like to collect points and come home with the bacon
51 They're not rationing this kind of radio product
52 Odd Fellows with horns, and teeth on their abdomens
53 Blow the villain's fuse
55 The first Hitler
56 You'll thimply thiththle in thith thith Augutht
57 The evil that men do (pl.)
59 The big top
60 Federal Horsingabout (abbr.)
63 Americans care a continental for it (abbr.)
65 A little company
66 Racial beginning

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

IT'S TIME TO SAY GOOD-BY

Continued from Page 36

in gloom and shadow. Tessa must have dozed, because when Johnny spoke to her she jumped, startled, and it was a minute before her eyes found him standing against the closed door, watching her.

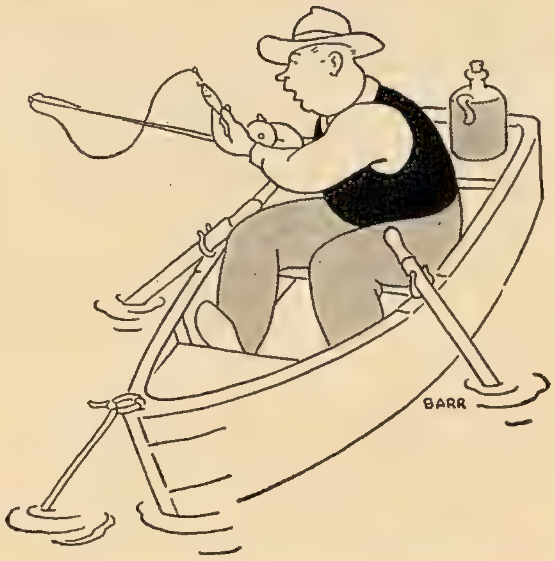
He had spoken her name, and his voice sounded surprised and disconcerted at finding her here.

THE FISHERMAN

Behold the fisherman: his creel,
His 8-ounce rod, his 3-spool reel,
His 9-pound line, his gallon flask,
His quite immeasurable task!

His 8-foot boat, the 4-mile lake,
His dollar thirst, the penny slake,
His 2-mile row, his 10-ton wish,
His 12-yard cast—and his 2-inch
fish!

—MARY WARD.



"Johnny!" she cried, and she was across the room, in his arms, clinging to him.

"What's happened, for heaven's sake? Is anything wrong with the kids?" he asked quickly.

"No, nothing's wrong. Only I had to see you, darling. I just had to!"

"Good thing I wasn't in Africa." He spoke with amusement, and with something else. Something she couldn't quite grasp at the time.

"Isn't it!" she said with relief, missing that other thing entirely. "Oh, Johnny," she said, "it's been so awful up there! So lonely, and everything's gone wrong!"

"Suppose you tell me about it while I change," he said, kissing the salty wetness of her eyes and putting her gently down on the edge of the bed. "I had no idea you were coming, and the colonel's wife is giving a party for the younger set. Seems the colonel's son married some nice young girl the day before he left for overseas duty, and Mrs. Olmstead wants every one under forty to come over and cheer the girl up a little."

Tessa couldn't resist remarking, "It's nice that you're having such a good time down here!"

Johnny threw her an odd, appraising look over his shoulder. "Ummm," he said, hanging up his jacket neatly.

"Where is the party?"

"At the Mayflower. The colonel's lived there all his life. He's one of the retreads. An officer from the last war."

"How nice that it's at the Mayflower! Catherine came down with me, and she's staying there. She asked us to join her for dinner if we had nothing better to do."

"Carlson along?"

"No. Catherine wanted to get some material for some story or other."

"Oh," Johnny said. He paused in the midst of unknotting his tie and Tessa could see his face in the mirror. It looked thoughtful. Then he said, "Well, nice that you had company on the way down. And now tell me—what are some of these crises that are so terrible?"

He smiled at her, his mouth thin and strong and well shaped as she remembered it, his grin boyish, engaging. And watching him, Tessa wondered whether a day would ever come when she would stop loving him so terribly. It hurt to love any one this much. Desire was a physical pain, a gnawing emptiness, and she longed now to put her arms about him, to beg him to love her, always to love her. But he was moving about the room quickly and methodically, hanging uniform trousers just so and dumping his shirt into the laundry bag in the closet—things he had never done at home!—and waiting for her to tell him why she had come.

"Johnny, you aren't angry with me because I came down, are you?"

He turned to look at her, and he thought in quick pity what a little girl she was! Afraid of the dark. Afraid of all the darkness abroad in the land these terrible days. Poor Tessa! he thought, and when he spoke his voice was warmed by his pity, so that she felt encouraged, thinking he understood and didn't mind her terrors.

"Of course I'm not angry. Now, what's happened?"

And while he dressed she told him. She had already changed from her traveling clothes and wore a pretty black sheer dress and a wide-brimmed black hat. Her skin looked warm and creamy and glowing. She had asked Johnny whether her dress would do for Mrs. Olmstead's party and he had said, "Very!" so now she could talk while he shaved and showered and changed.

The bright pencil of her voice listed her woes for him and it seemed to her own listening ears that the sum of them was stupendous.

"For one thing—money. I know you told me that I absolutely mustn't cash in any of those government bonds, but I don't see how I'm going to live if I don't. Johnny, I'm not going to live with your mother. I just won't! I'll die first! I'll get a job. Welding. Anything."

Johnny didn't look up from tying his shoelaces. "Have to be a pretty good job to bring you in three hundred a month or more, which is what you'd need to stay on in the house."

"But if I made half that, couldn't the rest come out of savings?"

"Absolutely not! That money, plus whatever insurance I've been able to hang onto, is all that stands between you and the children and actual want if anything should happen to me. And if nothing happens, and I get mustered out of the army one of these days, we'll need something to live on until I shake down into a new job."

"OH, the future!" Tessa cried impatiently. "What's the use of hanging onto a lot of money that we need now, just because we might need it three or four years from now? Lots of things can happen by then. You don't know what it's like to be tied down to the house all day and all night with two children! Isn't it enough that I had to give up my husband? Do I have to give up everything else, too? Lots of other people aren't giving up anything."

"And lots of other people are giving up everything, Tess. Lives, homes, children. Lots of people haven't had a square meal in a year. Lots of people—" He stopped against the gathering discontent in the pretty face opposite him.

"I know, Johnny, and I suppose I sound selfish, but I'm not really. I mean, I'm perfectly willing to make all kinds of sacrifices, and I have made them, but when the money's there, in the bank, I don't see why I have to go home to live with your mother. Why can't we move down here to Sherwood's apartment?"

"There's a young girl you're going to meet tonight," Johnny said, "a Mrs. Lassiter, who brought three children down here and signed a lease on a two-room apartment, and do you know where her husband is now? In New Guinea."

"But you're not likely to be sent abroad—"

"In the army anything is likely. And the expense of moving down here and then having to move back—"

Tessa bit her lip in vexation. "Oh, I'm so sick of talking about money, money, money!"

"Then why don't you grow up," Johnny said, "and start doing something about it?" And then he said, "We'll have to talk about this later. If we don't get started to the party, it'll be over before we get there."

He switched off the light, held open the door, and waited for Tessa to pass through. Going down the long, carpeted hall, and later in the lobby and on the street, Tessa was aware of many feminine heads turning to look at Johnny admiringly. The weeks of military training that he'd had at the War College had made him leaner, harder, and there was about him an air of purposefulness that women could sense, that made him more attractive to them than he had ever been.

Well, Tessa thought grimly, walking along beside him, they should know! She, too, had been excited, buoyed up, by a Johnny in uniform in the beginning. She had even looked forward a little to all the freedom she would have—not having to meet trains or darn socks or plan elaborate dinners—but the freedom had turned to dust and ashes. There was nothing to do with it, no one to share the suddenly free hours. And, too, though most of the other women she knew wouldn't come right out and admit it, being a war widow brought with it tremendous emotional readjustments in the lives of women like herself, accustomed to happy and satisfying marriages.

She would wangle Johnny into letting her come to Washington. Somehow, she told herself, I'll get down here!

COLONEL OLMSTEAD was not at the party when Tessa and Johnny got there, but George Worth was, surprisingly. They found him in the lobby of the Mayflower.

"Why, I thought you were somewhere in Australia at least!" Tessa said, giving him her hand.

"Thought I'd be there myself by now," George admitted. "But the powers that be have seen fit to keep me in Washington for a while. 'Ours not to reason why!'" George quoted lightly. "As a matter of fact, I've been standing here waiting for a kind and friendly face to join me before tackling what awaits me upstairs. Hi-ya, Johnny? You're looking well. The battle of Washington hasn't done you in yet."

"Not quite. I'll be glad to leave it, though."

"I know," George said, and the two men understood each other without further explanations.

Why? Tessa wondered, standing between them in the elevator. Why did all men have this tremendous impatience to get into battle? They stepped out of the elevator and into the din of a successful cocktail party. Though not, as it turned out, successful for Tessa.

At home, in Linton Heights, Tessa had usually been the prettiest young matron at any of the parties she and Johnny went to, and that had automatically made her the most popular. But though her practiced eye told her that she was also the prettiest young woman here, the results were not the same. Here the talk was good and hard and substantial. It concerned the war, and Washington, and it swung around speculations as to what kind of peace, what kind of world could be expected afterward. These young

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America's FINEST Cigarette

people in the thick of war—fighting and working and living through it —seemed to have a vast impatience with anything not directly concerned with it. Tessa found herself saying again and again:

"No, I haven't read it. . . . I don't believe I do know him. What does he do? . . . Why, I don't know, really. I haven't thought of it—" and turning helplessly, finally, to George, with whom she could flirt, and talk of home, and rest the confusion of her thoughts.

Mrs. Olmstead was much like Mrs. Barnes. A large dominant woman who thought that being the wife of an army officer was the noblest calling of all, and was sure that every young officer's wife felt privileged to be able to make any sacrifice she might be called upon to make.

"THE colonel is *so* fond of your husband," she confided to Tessa. "He's singled him out as being one of the most important and most reliable young officers on his staff. You should feel very proud of him."

"I do," Tessa said politely. "Though I find it lonely at home without him."

"Well, there's so much useful war work for you young wives to interest yourselves in, that there shouldn't be many empty hours on your hands."

Tessa smiled and said nothing. She felt nobility being stuffed down her throat, and she didn't like it. Mrs. Olmstead was here, with her husband. What did she know of Tessa's life? And war work was all very well—but you needed a little fun, too. A little companionship.

Tessa found Johnny, pulled him away from the little group he seemed to be having such a gay time with. "Let's go, darling. I'm having a wretched time with these people. I don't know a soul to talk to."

"We can't leave yet. And if you're bored, for heaven's sake, don't show it!" And he left her. But George didn't leave her. He found her and stuck by her, an oasis in the desert, and because she was nervous and self-conscious and ill at ease her voice came out higher than she ever intended it to be, and her laughter was rather loud and frequent as she talked intimately with George, and twice Mrs. Olmstead turned to look at her thoughtfully, and once Johnny frowned toward her warningly.

But George was not to be stopped. He was as reckless and uncaring here as he had been in Linton Heights, not caring what people thought, and his humor went around the room like little barbs, and found their marks and left their scars, and he carried Tessa along with him, and the two created somewhat of a small scandal, and Johnny was furious.

It was George who discovered one of the guests drinking brandy, and who said to her gravely, "And what do you take for breakfast, madame? Opium?" And George who inadvertently pointed the soda bottle in the wrong direction so that its contents fizzed beautifully over the resplendent uniform of a naval commander who had been a champagne salesman before getting himself a commission. George, grabbing a towel and helping the irate commander to dry his sleeve, was overwhelmed with remorse.

"Gosh," he said, grinning disarmingly, "I guess that's more water than you've ever seen, commander!" And the commander's smile was bleak and his silence terrible.

"George!" Tessa whispered, shocked. "He's your commanding officer!"

George stared at her. "If he'd had for one day what I've had for months on end—" he said bitterly. "Don't worry. I won't be court-martialed. It's too damn true."

But after that Johnny elected to leave. They said their good nights to Mrs. Olmstead and her new and rather plain daughter-in-law. Mrs. Olmstead smiled upon Johnny fondly, though the smile seemed to cool a little when it reached Tessa.

"I'm so sorry the colonel couldn't be here," she apologized. "But something urgent came up at the office. He'll be sorry to have missed you."

Johnny muttered the appropriate reply and practically pushed Tessa out into the hall. "You and your party cut-up didn't do me much good, you know. These people are important. To me, anyway."

"I thought them dull and stuffy."

Johnny looked at her. "I suppose you would," he said, and they marched down the hall, Johnny in anger and Tessa pretending anger but secretly afraid. Johnny would never forgive her if she had really spoiled his relationship with the Olmsteads!

She put her hand into his. "I'm sorry," she said penitently. "Don't be angry."

He peered down at her as they stood there waiting for the elevator. "It's not a matter of being angry, Tess. But these people are my friends. Not only for now but after the war. I've about decided to stay on here in Washington. This is where things will be happening."

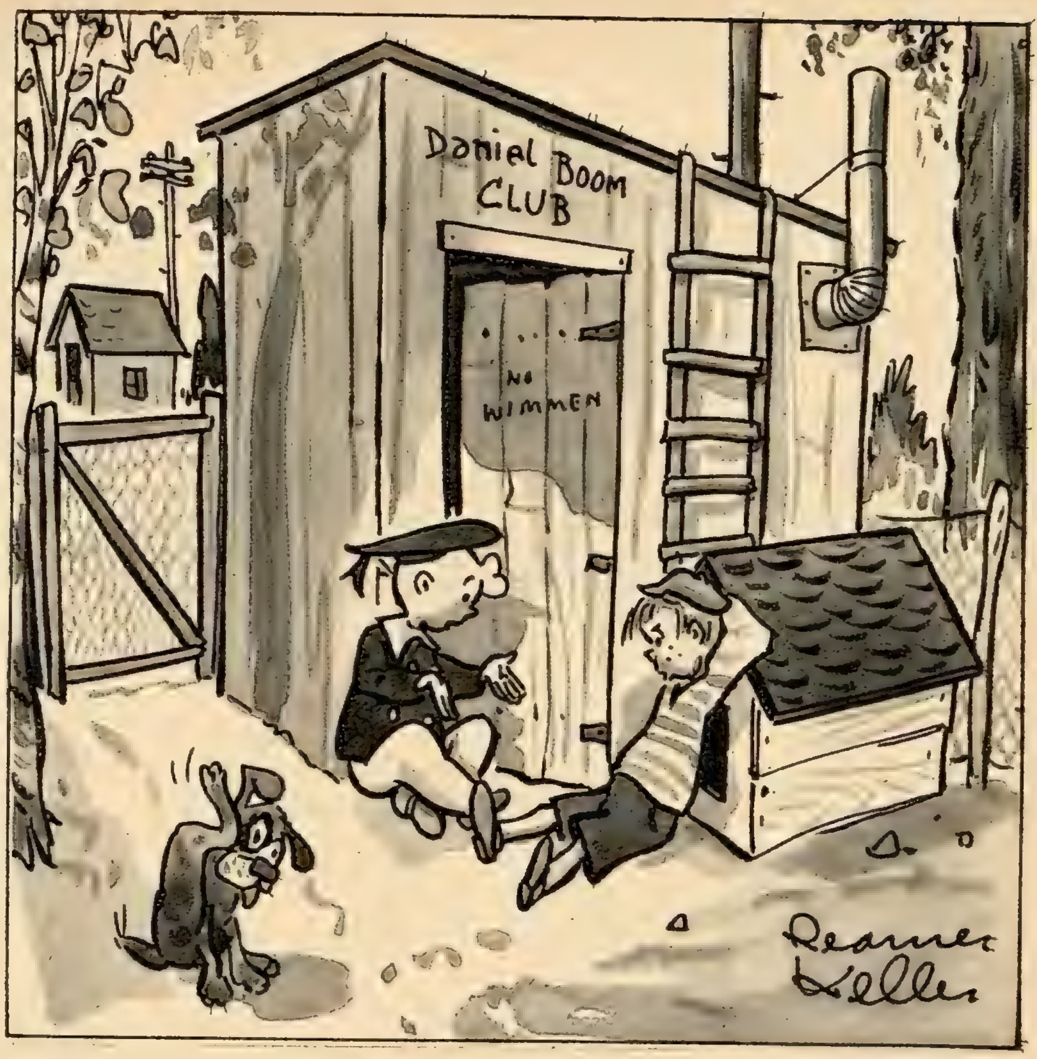
"Stay on in Washington?" Tessa echoed. Among these people with whom she had nothing in common? These bright young men and women who, because they were an integral part of the war, thought and felt and talked differently than any people Tessa had ever known? How would she ever like them? How would they ever like her? How far, and how fast Johnny was slipping away from the old life they had known together!

The elevator slid to a stop, the door rolled smoothly open, and Tessa and Johnny got out and made their way in thoughtful silence to the suite Catherine was occupying.

IT was strange that again and again, during dinner, Tessa should find herself wishing that she had not

"We're delirious, of course."

HARDTACK



"I don't see what the government wants with old tooth-paste tubes—there's hardly any tooth paste left in them."

brought Catherine down here with her! She chided herself for the thought, reminding herself that Catherine was her friend. Her best friend. And if Catherine and Johnny seemed to be having a very good time together, well, what of it? It didn't mean a thing, and she should be above such petty suspicions.

But the silver coolness of Catherine's voice seemed to be everywhere, seemed to follow Tessa and Johnny into every discussion and to come between them, bringing Johnny neatly back to her, intact.

They dined in Catherine's rooms, and Tessa could see Johnny enjoying the warmth and the friendliness and Catherine's bright crisped humor and the way she saw to it that the entire evening revolved around him. Catherine had never looked lovelier, Tessa thought enviously. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes sparkled and laughter came warmly and readily to her wide curved mouth. She wore a white dress of some clinging material, and against it her dark hair and black eyes were magnificent. And though Tessa could see clearly that Johnny was enjoying Catherine because she had no complaints to bring to him, she seemed helpless, nevertheless, to deflect the stream of her own worries.

"Johnny doesn't know what it's been like up there for me, does he, Catherine?"

"It hasn't been fun," Catherine admitted, "but it isn't quite as bad as Tessa makes it sound, Johnny. Don't worry too much about her, with all that you've got on your mind. Women like Tessa just have to learn to be good sports about the things they're going to have to give up. It's the truth, darling," she said softly, contritely, to Tessa. "All you girls—Jill and Beth and you and the rest of them—have to be good sports."

"You needn't take Johnny's side against me!" Tessa retorted indignantly.

"DARLING, I'm not! I'm just trying to help you, to make you see what you're up against. Johnny has an army on his hands now. And by the way, Johnny, I met the most interesting young man the other day. He's in aerial photography, and I think you'd enjoy meeting him. He said—" And then they were off, deeply absorbed in talk Tessa had come to hate secretly and fiercely—talk about the war. It was awful to have to live through it. Must every one talk of it constantly?

"Johnny's even talking about never coming back," Tessa said once, "about staying here in Washington after the war."

"I can see why he'd like to," Catherine said thoughtfully. "You have the feeling that everything's going to happen right here, everything exciting and important."

"That's it!" Johnny said, leaning forward eagerly. "We'll be running the world from Washington, D. C. Why, anything can happen down here. You feel that everywhere else you'd just be marking time."

"But I can see why Tessa wouldn't like it," Catherine went on. "All her clubs and friends and activities are tied up in Linton Heights. She'd be lost here, with nothing to do."

"Well," Johnny said, "it's a long way off. We'll cross that bridge when we come to it."

"I'd like to be down here myself," Catherine remarked, tasting the cold white wine reflectively, deciding it was right. "But Carlson loves the country." Her smile and Johnny's joined for a minute across the candlelit table. They seemed to understand each other well, those two! The radio played softly, and Tessa was always to remember that moment. Time paused and held the three of them together, like one of those stills from a movie before the action goes on again. There was Catherine at the head of the table, amused, reflective, sure of herself. And Johnny wanting to know her better, wanting to talk to her, but turning his dark handsome head to Tessa and smiling at her while his eyes remained grave, considering her thoughtfully. Tessa never knew how she must have appeared to Catherine and Johnny that night, but if the confusion of her thoughts was revealed in her face, she must have seemed pretty and soft and discontented and spoiled.

"I HATE Washington," Tessa spoke out of her discontent. "Every one we met at the Olmsteads' sounded like—like radicals. Saving the world is going to be so different after the war and all that—"

"Well," Catherine murmured, with a faint tracing of cynicism in her low voice, "don't worry your pretty little head about it, Tessa. It will be enough like the old world to have in it a man who will see to it that you're taken care of and sheltered. It's only the women who crave independence and freedom you find holding the bag in the end."

Her dark eyes closed over and she seemed to be examining her own thoughts on that utterance, when the phone in the next room rang. Rising to answer it, Catherine remarked, "Carlson said he might join me here. Perhaps that's he now, downstairs."

But it wasn't Carlson. The call was for Johnny. Catherine came out and sat with Tessa while Johnny went in to the phone. He seemed to be gone an unusually long time. Tessa, waiting, suddenly found herself tensing, her hands gripping the arms of her chair. Something was wrong. Tessa could sense it. Perhaps one of the children had been hurt!

Her throat began to ache in a dry queer way. Catherine glanced at her but said nothing. Yes, there *was* something wrong. She knew it the minute Johnny came back into the room, for though his voice was controlled, steady, his face was—queer. As though even he had not yet grasped, entirely, the significance of whatever had happened to him.

"Tessa," he said, "I think we'd better be going now."

"Johnny, what is it? What's happened? It's not one of the children?"

"No," he said, "it's not one of the children. I'll tell you in the cab, on the way back to the hotel."

She rose and submitted, like a confused, frightened child, to having her coat put on for her. Johnny's hands remained on her shoulders for a minute, pressing them, and when she turned unexpectedly, she saw that his face was contorted, was looking desperately sorry for her!

"Johnny, tell me." But she knew already.

"In the car," he said. "We've got to hurry."

Catherine had not risen. Her eyes had watched Johnny, and now he came over to tell her good-by, and he bent his dark head and kissed her lightly. A casual kiss of farewell. Friend to friend. Catherine smiled. Stiffly, awkwardly. She held out her hand. She whispered:

"Good-by, Johnny. I'll see you again—one of these days."

"Good-by, Cat," he said. "Best of everything."

She nodded and smiled and said good night to Tessa, and long after Johnny and Tessa had left she was still sitting there, her arms and back numb, her hands cold. Carlson came at midnight. She was not surprised. She had been expecting him. His key turned in the lock and he came in and looked astonished to see her there, sitting in the chair, the dinner table not cleared.

"I had to come," he said. "It's lonely in that big house without you. You don't mind?"

"No, it's all right."

"Why don't you let him alone?" Carlson asked, and his voice sounded querulous and complaining, like an old man's. "Why do you follow him, pretending to be Tessa's friend?" And when she did not speak or move, he said, "Let's get out of here. Let's go away somewhere. Palm Springs, perhaps. We'll pack and leave tomorrow."

Her eyes lifted to his and she looked at him as though he were an utter stranger. "I am going away," she said clearly. "But not to Palm Springs. After all, there's a war on, and I'm a writer. I think I'd like to get the necessary passports and go abroad. As quickly as possible."

IT had begun to snow. A soft wet snow that would soon turn to rain. Each crystal of snow—perfect, star-shaped—seemed to find a separate place for itself on the windshield of the taxi that was taking Tessa and Johnny out toward the Pentagon Building. "I'd better go there first," Johnny had decided, consulting his watch. "Colonel Olmstead wants to see me as soon as possible." And then he had added, "No wonder he ducked out of that party, with all this cooking."

"All what cooking?" Tessa's eyes were fastened to Johnny's face. "You mean—it's happened? You're going away?"

"Yes," he said. "I'm going away."

"Oh, Johnny, no!" And she began to tremble violently so that he put an arm across her shoulders and pressed her against him.

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"Can't tell you till I get there. Then I'll cable you."

The last remnants of the secure, love-filled, pleasant world she had known shattered and fell apart at her feet. Even in Washington, Johnny had been at the other end of a telephone wire. Now he was dropping out of the world.

He spoke and moved strangely, like a man in a dream, and it occurred to her to wonder if he was afraid. This was what he had wanted, what he had worked toward, yet he sat beside her in a silence that was different from any other silence they had ever shared. The taxi stopped before the huge incredibly ugly Pentagon Building that was set down in the midst of wasteland that the government had once hoped to make model farmland. Johnny got out and slammed the door and disappeared into the building. She waited a long time, and then his familiar figure was walking toward her again. He got in beside her and they drove on toward the hotel, and there was so much to say that neither of them could think of where to begin, so they said nothing.

IT wasn't until they lay side by side in bed in the darkened hotel room that they spoke any words of importance. Johnny had left word to be called at four in the morning.

"Well," she spoke into the darkness, "this is what you've wanted. I suppose you're very happy about it." And, when he didn't reply immediately, "There were probably lots of single men—men without children and responsibilities—who could have gone. But they knew how anxious you were to go!" She could not seem to help the bitterness in her voice.

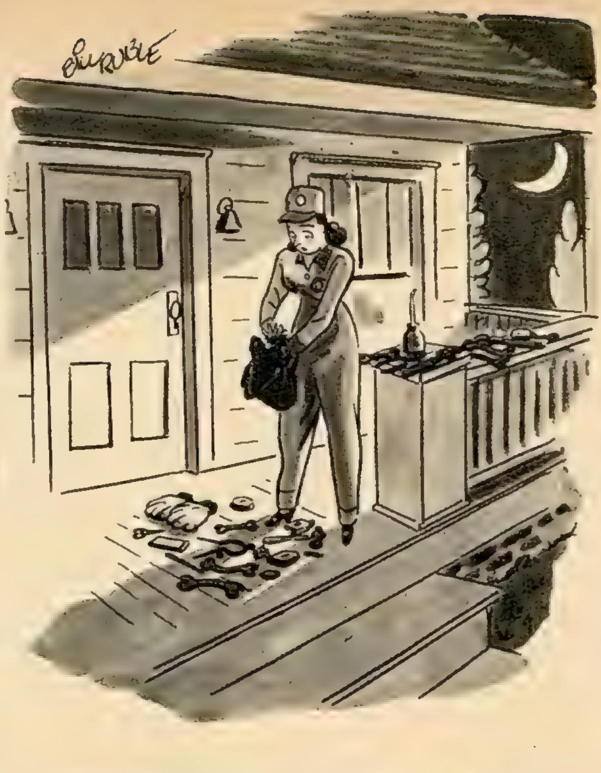
Johnny spoke beside her. Quietly. "You've got to learn to be a good sport about it, Tess. You've got to learn to find happiness in people instead of things. You never have, you know."

"That's ridiculous! I've been happy with you—"

"With me and your house and your car and your friends and your clothes and your clubs and money. Now—you've got just me. And the kids. For the duration."

"But I haven't got you! You're going to be thousands of miles away from me! Oh, I know I should be thankful for what we've had, and for the fact that you're alive, and God knows I am thankful. But why *you* have to be sent—a man with children!" Her fears about the future sharpened her tones. He found his mind escaping from Tessa, harking back to Catherine, wondering how she would be in this situation.

Of course Catherine had financial independence, and that made a tremendous difference. But just the same, he thought, she would probably have been a pretty good sport about it. She would go her way, standing on her own two feet, fighting, keeping her troubles to herself. But Catherine had always fought, had always stood alone. It wasn't fair to compare her with Tessa, who was defenseless, who was a product of her times and of her environment. *I must be more patient,* he thought.



But Tessa, beside him, talking without getting a reply, sensed that withdrawal. And she knew, with a sort of helpless rebellion, what Johnny wanted her to be like and what she couldn't seem to make herself be like. A chasm had been widening steadily and constantly between them ever since the night she had kissed him good-by for the first time, at the Linton Heights station. Their lives were threatening to go in different directions, and now, trying to pull Johnny back to her, Tessa did the only thing she knew how to do. The thing she had done to coax Johnny out of all his ill tempers in the past.

She turned to him suddenly and crept into his arms, bringing her love warmly and ingenuously, begging him to take it and not to be angry with her any more. And because Johnny, too, felt alone and even a little frightened in a way that had nothing to do with cowardice, he was grateful for her warmth and her nearness. Snow thickened silently against the windows, and then turned to rain through the night that they clung together, their kisses fierce and hard as they had not been in months, their sentences broken, tumbled, and Johnny telling himself that this was it, this was love, just this, nothing but this; not the complexes and the doubts and the questionings, just this warmth and companionship and ecstasy.

And yet, afterward, he did not want to kiss her again.

She slept at his side. She must have cried in her sleep, because after a while he felt the wetness of her tears on his arm. Poor Tessa. He was sorry for her. He was sorry to be leaving her. He was sorry that, for all the Tessas in the world, this war had to come along and show them up. As they clung together, Tessa had begged of him:

"Johnny darling, you do love me, don't you?"

"Yes," he had muttered against the softness of her hair. "Of course."

But he didn't. Somehow, in these months she had changed, and so had he, and meeting her now, he did not think he would like her as a person, and he did not think he loved her as a woman. And that was awful. He had a sudden wild thought that perhaps he would be killed. Perhaps he would never have to come back and solve this final problem between himself and Tessa.

Rain was beating against the window. He reached over and switched the light on the clock. Half past three. Half an hour more of this life, of lying beside Tessa.

"Just think," he spoke to himself silently, "I might never see her again. Don't be a fool. You're just going over to take some movies, not be a MacArthur. Just the same, there are things I'd like to do. Wish I'd had a little more time, after all. Ought to write to Jackie. Ought to tell him to take care of his mother—"

Funny. When you have a son, you sort of look at him and think of all the things you'll do together. Play football, go to the games, get him into your college. And then a thing like this comes along. Ought to have spent more time with the kid. Wonder if he'll miss me? Well, I'll write to him, a nice long letter, and tell him what I expect of him, just in case— Well, just in case.

THERE were a couple of bills he ought to pay up. One or two people he wished he could call. But there wasn't time. He watched the clock. He tried to understand that he might never again walk into the locker room of the Country Club on a Saturday afternoon. Never again hear the good hard sound of an iron hitting a ball a hundred yards down the fairway. Never again see his son. Never get around to telling him a few of the things Johnny himself had learned just lately. That thing Catherine had mentioned. The business of being a good sport. All life boiled down to that in the end. Fight for what you want, and fight hard. Have the guts to take what you get in the final play.

The phone shrilled. Tessa woke. Clearly and fully.

"Don't go, Johnny. *Please don't go!*"

He kissed her and hushed her, and she sat up in the bed, hands holding tightly to the bedclothes, and watched him dress. The things he would need were already packed. Just a few things. A very few. It was black outside. The light in the room was yellow and sickly. Dressed, he stood before her, and he seemed ready for it, whatever it was, now that the time had come. His uniform, no longer quite so new, looking as though it belonged to him. The silver bars on his shoulders. The courage, the steadiness in his eyes looking down at her. The gentleness, the kindness, of his hands holding hers.

"I DON'T know when I'll see you again," he said to her quietly. "It might be a long time."

"Yes, Johnny." Don't let me cry. Dear God, don't let me cry. I've done everything else wrong, but please don't let me cry. I'll do anything, if only You won't let me cry, and if only You'll take care of Johnny, wherever he's going.

"Tell the kids good-by for me. And try to keep your chin up. It's going to be tough for you. Nobody knows that better than I do. I wish I didn't have to leave you, but I have to go. You know that, don't you? I mean, you understand how a man feels about these things?"

His face was pale, set. His mouth looked hard.

"I understand. If we just could have had a little more time. There are so many things—"

"That's what we all want, Tess. All through life, I guess. A little more time. Well, just do the best you can. Good-by, Tess."

"Good-by, Johnny."

He bent down and kissed her mouth and her arms wound themselves tightly around his neck and she gave a little shuddering sob. And then he straightened and put on his hat and picked up his bag. At the door he turned. "So long," he said, and the door closed. After a while a taxi started up downstairs. Numbly Tessa crept to the window and looked out. She saw Johnny's back disappearing into the taxi. The door slammed. The taxi rolled off into the rain and the darkness.

THE HOME FRONT

"We're going ashore. Wrap us up a couple of steaks."

Tessa turned slowly back into the room. Back to emptied closets. Back to the picture of herself and the children that Johnny had forgotten to take with him. There was something symbolic about that, she felt, but her weary mind couldn't grasp it yet. Back in bed, her knees drawn up to her chin, she let bits of the week-end sift through her mind.

"It's a good thing the maid quit. We couldn't have afforded her anyway. . . . You're not to touch those War Bonds. . . . Just don't take mother so seriously. . . . I've got a war to fight. Can't you make a few decisions yourself? . . . Yes, I'm going away. . . . Tessa, I might not see you again for a long time."

She looked around the strange ugly room that she was in. What was she doing here? She must go home immediately. She must get home and start to think about what to do. Everything was in such a mess. Such a dreadful mess.

WHEN she left Washington the next day, George Worth went with her. He had called early that morning to apologize for his behavior at the Olmsteads', and when he learned that Johnny had left, he offered to go up to New York with Tessa.

"I'm on the loose, and a two-day leave can easily be arranged. Besides," he said with unaccustomed thoughtfulness, "you must be feeling pretty low right now."

And Tessa was grateful for his company, for his good humor, for his insouciance that kept her mood of depression from settling around her shoulders. She didn't want to confront Johnny's mother with any of the wrong spirit showing in her face, or she would be in for a gentle lecture on her courage and how small the sacrifice was that she had so far been called upon to make, and so on and on! She was sorry that Catherine wasn't coming back with her, but Catherine had told her over the phone that business would keep her in Washington for another week.

Catherine had sounded a little strange and vague, but then, she always sounded like that when she was working. Tessa thought no more about it. There were too many other things to think about, heaven knew!

"What are you planning to do with yourself now?" George had asked her on the train coming up.

"I wish I knew!" Tessa sighed. "Get a job, for one thing. Any kind of job. I could leave the children with Johnny's mother."

"I can't picture you buckling down to a steady job. Besides, you ought to have some fun for yourself. You're only young once, you know."

"Wolf in friend's clothing?" Tessa asked lightly.

"Definitely." And then, "Seriously, though, I wish you'd sort of count on me, Tessa. With Johnny gone, you—well, you might need a friend. Never can tell. And it looks as though I'll be shuttling back and forth between New York and Washington for a while. There's no sense in going into a hermitage."

She supposed there wasn't. It would be nice to feel she could call upon George for a dinner or a theater date once in a while without getting emotionally involved. And she could keep him under control, she thought confidently. How the other women in town would envy her such a young attractive escort! And Johnny had shown no objection to it.

"Thanks. I'll remember your offer." And she looked at him speculatively, remembering that men didn't care much for him. They had always given his physical skill and courage a grudging admiration, but they had seemed to feel there was something almost indecent in his arrogance, in his success with women. Since he'd become a war hero, their attitude had changed because they thought it ought to. But, underneath, they still distrusted him. Well, Tessa thought, he probably is a heel. A gay, amusing, unscrupulous heel. But as long as I'm not going to fall in love with him, I'm safe.

IT was nice to have him beside her on the bus, rumbling along the familiar streets of Linton Heights. It was gratifying to note the surprise and appreciation in Jill Marshall's eyes when she saw Tessa and George together.

"I've got a darling little 4-F I want you to meet," Jill told them sardonically, and pulled a small pale man out from among the other passengers for their inspection. "This is Tom Denis. He's only got one kidney, haven't you, darling?" Jill asked him sweetly.

Tom Denis flushed and looked bewildered and acknowledged the introductions. "Wish I could be in uniform," he told George, "but I've only got one kidney."

"I'm sure," George murmured. "It's all right, old man. I'm sure everybody understands."

Tom Denis looked grateful. Jill was thinner, Tessa noticed. Shockingly thin. And her hands trembled, and things soft and pretty in her face had hardened and you began to notice, now, the little veins around her nose that came of drinking too much. Poor Jill, Tessa thought, getting off the bus at her own house. Poor all of us who have nothing to do but wait!

The street—pleasant, tree-lined—seemed quieter, emptier even than it had been when she left it. Last week's snow was melting in the gutters and lawns were temporary pools of mud. All down the street, garage doors were closed on cars set up on blocks for the duration. There was a service flag now in almost every house. Window shades were drawn to the sills in all the houses in an effort to keep in the precious heat. You felt that the whole street, the whole world in fact, had temporarily died and was buried behind that row of drawn shades.

George walked beside her up the narrow flagstone walk. But he didn't go inside with her. "I imagine that you'd rather be alone for a while," he said, startling her with the sensitiveness of his perceptions.

"I think I would," she said. "And thanks for seeing me home."

"Not at all. I was glad to, of course. And I'll call you one day soon."

The house was dusty and cold. Tessa walked through the rooms listlessly, running her fingers over windowsills and banister, finding thick dust everywhere. The house must be cleaned, the oil burner started, before she called Mrs. Barnes to bring the children back. The mail that she had brought in with her was nothing but bills. She tossed them onto her desk wearily. She sat down on the bed in her own room.

"Well," she spoke aloud, "here you are, Mrs. Barnes—with luck!—for the duration. Might as well relax and enjoy it."

BUT for all her good intentions to get a job, Tessa began to find that the habits of years were strong upon her. She never seemed able to get up early enough in the morning, for one thing. And Mrs. Barnes was reluctant to take care of the children while Tessa worked.

"Their home is broken up enough already. Why should they have their mother away all day, as well as their father? The thing for you to do is to pack up and come home."

But Beth Sanders was starting a new kind of day nursery for the children of newly employed mothers. She was throwing open her enormous house and doing things on a grand scale since, as she said, she had nothing else to do with either her time or her money. "If I can hold out until your nursery gets going," Tessa confided to her over cocktails, "I'll be free then to get a job. Beth, if you *knew* how I dread going home to Johnny's mother!"

And on the strength of that, she recklessly cashed in one of Johnny's War Bonds. "I'll be able to put the money back as soon as I get a job," she promised herself. Meanwhile it was wonderful to be able to write out checks again, to see that mountain of bills begin to dwindle.

SHE drew a deep breath. Things were beginning to look up. As soon as Jackie's spring vacation was over and he was back in school, as soon as Beth's nursery was started, she would find herself a job in a war factory, and by working overtime she would make up that money in no time.

Meanwhile she engaged a part-time maid to stay with the children so that she would not be tied to the house every minute. She had had no word from Johnny and, she told herself and Mrs. Barnes, if she were just to sit in the house and worry, she would simply go out of her mind! As it was, she began to notice that her nerves weren't as steady as they used to be. That she burst into tears at the slightest provocation, which was unlike her, since her disposition was fundamentally fairly placid and even.

And then one morning, three weeks after she had come home from Washington, she swung her feet out of bed, onto the floor, stood up, and found the floor rising dizzily to meet her. She grasped the bedpost to steady herself, and a wave of sickness washed over her. She fled into the bathroom, and when she came out she sank weakly down onto the chair before her dressing table.

"No," she said to the greenish-white face reflected there. "No, it can't be. I can't be going to have a baby—can I?"

Now Tessa has a new problem to face alone. Will it mean the end of all her plans to keep her own home, to help Beth with the nursery, to achieve independence by getting a job? Next week's chapter is dramatic, surprising.

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THIS MAN'S WAR
CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

If there is one thing we Americans have learned, it's the value of *teamwork*. Not only do we know what it can accomplish on the baseball diamond and the football gridiron but also in the office and the factory and on the production line.

It is rather difficult for the individual soldier and sailor to visualize himself as a member of the combined all-star armed-forces team. It's a pretty big team. But he becomes a member as soon as he is sworn in, and the sooner he learns team play the better off he is and the sooner this war will be over.

MARKOW
MOTH BALLS

That medal

A man's natural pride in his own outfit and branch of service is swell, and morale would be a forgotten word without it. What I'm talking about is the long-range view. For instance—

A staff sergeant writes me from Fort Lewis, Washington: "All branches of the service have had their credits, through the media of newspapers, magazines, radio, and movies, for the work they are doing. Except one. There is one branch which never seems to get mentioned. The Army calls us the Pill Rollers. More formally we are known as the Medical Department.

"Wherever there are soldiers you will find a field hospital or first-aid station or men of the Medical Corps ready to give service to the sick or wounded. The medics have no time out for rest when there is work to be done. Let the men of the Medical Corps have a little credit for a change. It will make us feel better to know our work is recognized, even in a small way."

Now, my first point is that there's enough credit to go all around and still have some left over. Furthermore, to my certain knowledge the medics have already received more than a little credit in all the media mentioned. Probably not as much as they deserve, but still considerable.

My second point is that, regardless of comparative publicity, *all* arms and services must contribute their proper shares to the team to win the game. Which we will, and by no mean score.

Take the North African operation. All branches of the service had to be in there bucking the line to make the play go. Some of the more spectacular arms, like the Armored Force and Air Force, may have received a major share of the publicity. But without the other arms and services there would have been no publicity at all. I mean favorable.

It was teamwork that counted.

It will take the combined efforts of every arm and service to bring us victory. "And we'll all stay free."

OLD SARGE.

* * *

Will you please give us the names and ranks of the men who head up the Army and Navy Departments? This to settle quite a bet.

Sgt. M. L. O.,
Somewhere-in-the-Pacific.

If the following information isn't enough let me know and I'll give you the rest privately.

First, the War Department. Secretary of War: Henry L. Stimson; Under Secretary of War: Robert P. Patterson; Assistant Secretary of War: John J. McCloy; Assistant Secretary of War (for Air): Robert A. Lovett; Chief of Staff: General George C. Marshall; Deputy Chief of Staff: Lieutenant General Joseph T. McNarney; Commanding General, Army Ground Forces: Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair; Commanding General, Army Air Forces: General Henry H. Arnold; Commanding General, Army Service Forces: Lieutenant General Brehon B. Somervell.

Now for the Navy Department. Secretary of the Navy: Frank Knox; Under Secretary of the Navy: James V. Forrestal; Assistant Secretary of the Navy: Ralph A. Bard; Assistant Secretary of the Navy (for Air): Artemus L. Gates; Chief of Naval Operations: Admiral Ernest J. King; Chief of Staff: Vice Admiral Richard S. Edwards; Vice Chief of Naval Operations: Vice Admiral F. J. Horne; Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps: Lieutenant General Thomas Holcomb; Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard: Vice Admiral Russell R. Waesche.

* * *

Can a citizen of the U. S. A. enlist in the Canadian Army? I have reason to think that it will be a matter of months before I will be drafted, and I don't want to wait that long.

L. W., Sparta, N. C.

Hold everything! Why go to Canada? If you are subject to eventual induction under selective service, then all you have to do is request your local board to put your name on the top of the list for immediate induction. They'll probably welcome you with open arms. As to enlisting in Canada, our government has no objection to its citizens enlisting in any of its allies' armies. On the other hand, nationals of the following countries have the right to serve under their own flag even though they may be called in our draft: British Commonwealth, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Belgium, Cuba, Norway, Poland, and France.

* * *

I am classified as a limited service man. For some time I have heard rumors of Officer Candidate Schools which are open to men of my category, but I have been unable to get any definite information concerning them.

Any help you may be able to give me will be greatly appreciated.

Pvt. H. D. P., Mitchel Field, N. Y.

I can answer you best by quoting from W. D. Circular No. 64, issued last March:

"It has come to the attention of the War Department that certain enlisted men are being denied the opportunity to attend any officer candidate school solely by reason of the physical defect(s) which they possessed at the time of their enlistment or induction and not disqualifying for their retention on active military service in enlisted status. It is the intent . . . that any man who is considered physically qualified for retention on active service, in an enlisted status, be considered physically qualified to attend the Army Administration officer candidate school, the Medical Administrative officer candidate school, the Adjutant General officer candidate school, and the Army Air Forces (administrative and statistical only) officer candidate school; and for appointment upon gradua-

Bonus?

tion therefrom. All commanders will take such steps as may be necessary to effect prompt compliance."

I might add to the above that I understand applications far exceed openings, so don't be too disappointed if you don't get immediate action.

* * *

While serving an enlistment in the Marine Corps I earned a medal for marksmanship with the machine gun. I am now serving in the Army, and I'd like to know if I'm allowed to wear the medal.

Pfc. N. C. W.,
Santa Monica, Calif.

Regulations say not. Unless the qualification in arms was made in the Army, and the period of qualification is still effective, you are not authorized to wear medals awarded in services other than the Army. (This does not apply to decorations and service medals.)

* * *

Can you give me a bit of information about the qualifications of a radio operator on a transport? How would I go about getting a transfer? Would another physical be necessary?

Cpl. J. Z.,
Camp Gordon Johnston, Fla.

To be eligible for assignment as radio operator on an Army transport, you must be a graduate of the Radio Signal Corps School and a member of the Signal Corps. For transfers within the Army look up A. R. 615-200 in your headquarters room. No physical examination is required unless there is a change of status to officer or warrant officer.

* * *

Is there any truth to the rumor we have heard out here that members of the armed forces will receive a bonus when discharged after the war? We thought that if any one knew you would.

Sgt. E. H. W.,
Somewhere-in-the-Pacific.

Just a rumor to date, sarge, although there's been quite a lot of talk about a postwar bonus and bills have even been introduced in Congress. Suggestions range from a lump sum, as was granted after the last war, to continuance of pay for a certain period after discharge. What appeals to me more than a possible bonus is the promise made by our leaders that they would do their best to see that no man is mustered out of military ranks into a bread line.

That makes sense.

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42 St., New York.

LIMITLESS MAGIC IN A LITTLE TUBE

Continued from Page 17

nates all static and gives extraordinary range and purity of tone. As one experienced in listening to it I can testify that until you have heard FM broadcasting you haven't heard radio.

Television manufacturing, too, is frozen. With peace, there will come a monumental thaw. By relaying from one transmitter to another, the engineers have accomplished television broadcasts over great distances. And electronic tubes make it possible to project television images on large screens—*in full color.*

BUT now let us look at some electronic accomplishments which will, within a few years, be commonplace adjuncts to daily living. Remember that these are not dreams but facts, proven by careful test:

The blind will be able to do a number of delicate jobs heretofore denied them. There will be earphones through which they will hear sounds something like those of an aviator's radio beam. The sounds will guide their fingers. They will be able to take their places on some assembly lines.

New electronic hearing aids will give practically normal hearing to thousands who are deaf.

Automobiles can be equipped with devices which will automatically adjust headlight glare as another car approaches. Garages fitted with "electric eyes" can be unlocked and the doors opened the moment the owner's car turns into the drive. These eyes can also be made to close and lock the doors again as the owner opens his front door.

Many railroad trains already have electronic devices to make head-on or rear-end collisions impossible, automatically shutting off power and applying brakes when danger is still far beyond the eyesight of the engineer. Protection of motorists at grade crossings will be guaranteed by guard gates which operate automatically at the approach of a train.

Street lights, farm lights, house lights, will be set to turn on exactly at dusk and turn off exactly at dawn—not by the setting of a clock but by the fading and glowing of natural light. All heating equipment will be regulated in advance to operate according to a schedule.

The farmer will manage the heating of his incubators or chick brooders without ever going near them, and livestock feeding and watering will be done on exact schedule even though the farmer is miles away.

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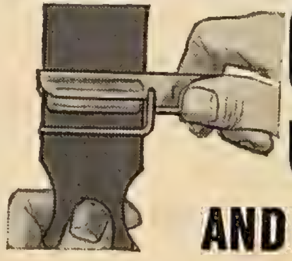

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The city man will send messages without the aid of a messenger—written messages, subject to no error in transmission. Banks have already recognized the validity of checks and drafts sent by radiophoto even across the oceans.

In industrial plants the operators of great machines will no longer depend upon mechanical devices to protect them against accidents. Electronic tubes can be made to stop machines, or actuate a guarding device if the worker's hands or body enter a danger zone.

EDITOR

I do not *like* Ye Editor.
He's spiteful, mean, and jealous,
And always buys from other guys
Whom I write just as well as!

MOLLIE HOGAN.

An impulse launched by a central station in the event of a great emergency can be sent by electronics along the wires of the house current. This impulse will sound an alarm in your "dead" radio, urging you to listen at once. An extension of this idea, not wholly perfected, would enable you to set your radio so that it would turn on automatically for those programs you had decided you wanted to hear.

Scientists are experimenting with electronic tubes to cure and tenderize meat, which would save much time and storage space.

Already this new servant of mankind is being used as follows:

It detects and instantly records hidden defects in high-grade steels and other metals, sometimes many inches beneath the surface.

It can sort, select, and classify in one operation more than 2,000,000 shades of color, something the human eye could not possibly do. Which is of great value to the textile and dyeing industries.

It helps wrap packages, packages of anything, with lightning speed, and it helps fill bottles to exactly the right capacity.

It examines packaged goods, such as candles, moving past on swift conveyor lines, and automatically rejects any which might have a foreign particle in them—a stone or a bit of metal or of glass. Likewise it inspects fruits, casting out any which are frostbitten or otherwise flawed.

It opens doors at the approach of one who would pass through, and closes them after him. It detects smoke and fumes which human senses could not detect, and gives immediate warning. It announces the presence in the air of dangerous dust or gases, and signals the mine manager or the factory manager. And it is the perfect, sleepless sentinel against fire or burglars.

Electronic tubes match colors for false teeth, and regulate safety valves on boilers; they bring elevators to a stop exactly level with the floor, and discover oils and minerals hundreds of feet underground; they are the control factor in air conditioning, and they sterilize foods in canning and preserving plants.

Still, the scientists tell me, one after another, "We haven't even started yet. All we know is that electronics has been able to help with anything we ever thought up, except creating life and preventing ultimate death."

All electronic tubes are based upon the same principle. Some are tiny globes. Others may be many feet long.

One type, already familiar, is the X-ray tube. Its usefulness is not limited to surgery. At the General Electric laboratories in Schenectady—and at the laboratories of other companies now concentrating upon electronics—million-volt X rays have been allowed to bombard fruit and berry seeds, vegetables and grains. All the signs point to a technique of the future which will increase the size and yield, the variety and the food quality, and the resistance to disease of the plants. Entirely new varieties of flowers have sprung from beneath the tube's rays.

The finest of all present-day optical microscopes magnifies an object to about 1,500 times its actual size. The electronic microscope gives pictures of the same object magnified up to 100,000 times its actual size.

So the study of all the materials which are necessary to the progress of mankind is opened up all over again. New vistas of understanding stretch out. The first crude microscope gave us a hint as to the nature of the universe. The electronic microscope may, at last, lead us to the truth.

I have discussed only those manifestations of this new science of electronics which, in wartime, it was proper to discuss. I talked to a good many electrical engineers. In answer to some of my questions they gave a wink and a grin and said, "Hush-hush! We've got it, but the enemy doesn't know about it yet. When the war's over, we can turn it loose for everybody to use. Man, there's no limit to these things. They'll make people dizzy. . . ."

THE END

ONCE I WAS A HEP CAT

Continued from Page 15

"She's slightly evil," Willy admitted anxiously. "Not exactly Mrs. Dracula—but strictly V-8. Of course she's strictly the mezz, too, Tommy. And I promised her . . . The suit for the date . . . Are you game?"

He was a step ahead of me there. I gathered that his sister was not too sweet-tempered and well able to take care of herself in the clinches, but good-looking. I said, "Okie dokie, soak me!" That clang talk gets in your blood.

Willie telephoned while I donned the clothing he produced from some dark corner. It was exactly like his uniform—only gayer, I thought. The coat was bright purple, the trousers a sort of mauve. I stared at myself in the pier glass. Nothing more moronic ever walked the earth, not even a zombie.

So I was free! I was no longer one of the Magnificent Mulraneys. I had achieved class distinction of my own.

The door opened and a tall youth walked into the store, calling for Willy. I went to greet him, extending my hand, anxious to try myself. I said:

"Hidee-how! I'm Tommy Benton, Quentin!" I made the genuflection I had seen illustrated, sweeping my hand across in front of my waist, barely touching the back of the stranger's hand. He grudgingly matched my gesture and we straightened up.

He was a big fellow, with a wild mop of hair and an amazingly small pork-pie hat crown. He had a slightly crooked nose and was dark and quite handsome in a crude way. He said, "I'm Hot-Pants Grady."

That seemed to mean something. Willy came running, and outside, on the walk, I could see five other frenetic figures pattering about, practicing the Lindy Hop. Hot-Pants was evidently their leader.

"What about Fatsy, Ratsy?" Hot-Pants demanded abruptly.

"I couldn't fix it," stammered Willy, red-faced. "She—she had a date with Tommy, here."

"Don't talk icky!" roared Hot-Pants. "Next week I'm lockin' up that chick, do y' click?"

"Okie, Hot-Pants," said Willy, retreating a step.

"See you get hep!" ordered Hot-Pants. "I'm king, Thing!"

He turned and stalked out. The five henchmen fawned upon him as he moved regally down the street. Willy said in awed accents, "That's Hot-Pants, the King. He wins all the contests. He used to be a boxer. He is a very hep cat—only Patsy does not care for him. . . ."

Two girls were coming in the door. I said hastily, "I'm Tommy Benton tonight, get it?" Willy gave me a funny look and introduced me to the females.

Lily was a little blonde thing, just right for Willy. But I had to stop and second-take on Patsy. It was like being poked with a baseball bat.

She was medium tall, and she wore a man's suit coat and short skirt and socks into moccasins. But she had race-horse legs and ankles like dreams in the night. Only her lips were painted and her olive cheeks were smoother than linen sheets, and the pools of her violet eyes were deep and lovely as a sylvan lake. . . . What am I talking about?

It was like that.

WILLY was just being happy. He frolicked out with Lily White, calling back, "Get wise, Patsy! This Tommy is a quick-wit, see? Get hep and have some pep!"

Patsy eyed me up and down and I felt slightly uncomfortable. This was not what I had ordered. I said, "All set from late black to early bright! Drag out rugs that are rough and damned to him who first cries hold, enough!"

Patsy said, "Well! You're new . . . Stew."

"Hot from the pot," said I, desperately strewing the clang slang.

"Well!" said Patsy. She kept sliding her glance at me as we followed Willy and Lily down toward a sign which spelled BROWNIE'S in dimmed neon. She moved on magic feet, light as air, graceful as a fawn. I was dripping with clichés from the classics, but only zoot language drooled from my tongue.

We went into Brownie's, ascending a flight of steps, bursting upon a scene of unparalleled action. A magnificent juke box gave forth cacophonous blats. Dozens of couples gyrated crazily in the dynamic steps of the Lindy Hop. Willy and Lily were among them forthwith.

I stopped, staring. Patsy smiled a thin smile. "The hep cats!" she murmured, "in their aboriginal state!"

Like savages they were, only more like cretins at a May dance. Their poor vacant faces were without color and devoid of emotion. They pranced and leaped and the sweat poured from them, but they had no fun. This was serious. This was ritual. Gravity rode them and made their burden almost too great.

I led Patsy to a soft-drink bar. I wanted time to catch on to this.

Of course I had taken ballet—all us Mulraneys do—and taps, under Robinson, and all the rest. But even father and mother had not caught up with jitterbugging. I had to absorb the rhythm before I essayed to dance or I would be exposed.

Hot-Pants was out there with a wiry brunette, and they were good. I watched them carefully for form. They were, I thought, more athletic than graceful, but they had something. Hot-Pants saw me with Patsy and glared. He seemed unhappier than any one. I suppose that made him king.

I absently tendered a twenty-dollar bill in payment for our drinks. The man examined it suspiciously, and Patsy said, "Well!" again in that funny voice.

The manager came and I hid behind Patsy. His name was Zilch, and I knew him well. He was an art collector in a small way and was often at the Mulraney ménage, trying to haggle father out of a picture. That's the way it is with us—always strange people around. Even juke-emporium owners. It is disgusting.

He did not know me in my disguise and I got my change. I said to Patsy, "I'm carrying the moola. Just say when, Wren!"

Patsy said, "It's conspicuous not to dance."

She was doubting me, I could tell. I was not clicking. My clang slang was off the beam. I breathed deeply and led her on the floor. This would make or break me.

I pranced, beating time with my right foot. I let Patsy take a break, keeping the rhythm. Then I moved in and did a pirouette and broke the hoe down on top of it. Patsy almost stopped dancing, but recovered and moved smoothly on.

I caught the offbeat and kept going. I tapped out a double-time number while gliding. Patsy came in, disbelieving. I saw the hep cats backing away, staring at me. I let myself go into it, and then it was fun.

I gave them Pat Rooney, always playing Patsy up, letting her come in on the flash pieces. I improvised a dozen steps. It was a cinch. I hated it to end. They were all goggling when the juke box ran down.

I BOWED to Patsy and said, "Smooth as silk, Beautiful!" I stalked to the organ and hauled out silver, eager for more music.

A snatching hand took a quarter from my palm. It disappeared into the machine, as Hot-Pants pressed five buttons and sneered at me, "Thanks for the melter, Smeller!"

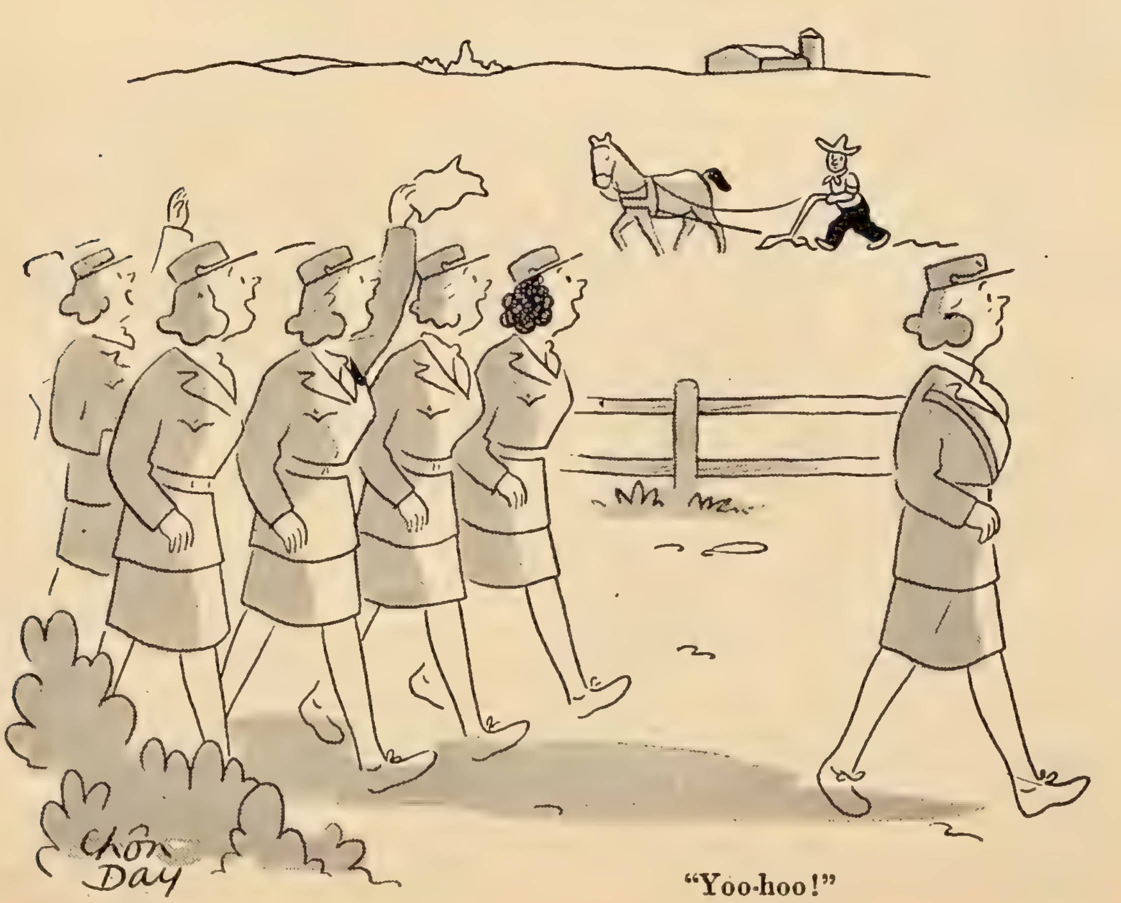
His elbow shoved me ungently aside. He seized Patsy and dragged her away. The zoot-suit court giggled, and before I could recover myself, Willy was holding my elbow. He whispered, "Nix, Tommy. Lay off." He had forgotten his clang slang. "Hot-Pants has all five of them ready to jump on us. They're a hard lot—even their dames get in on it. I don't want you hurt, Tommy!"

Lily whimpered a bit. They were two frightened children.

I looked Willy in the eye. I said, "You're no hep cat! You're a phony!"

"I'm just a beginner," wailed Willy. "Hot-Pants lets me hang around. . . . He's sweet on Patsy. . . ."

"Patsy just hangs around to keep us out of trouble—like we were kids," said Lily.



"Yoo-hoo!"

"I got to let her hang around or she will tell pop about my zoot suits," confessed Willy. "I have to hide them. . . ."

I sighed. Leave it to a Mulraney. Go out on a binge to forget yourself and have a hot time, and what do you get? Responsibility. Nice kids in wrong company. Uptown the Five Fabulous Brothers saving their country with publicity angles. Downtown their little brother is saddled with the future of the country in a zoot suit.

I said, "It's a lot of hooey, the whole business. Even the dance steps are synthetic."

"It's fun!" cried Willy rebelliously. "What can we do? Go to the movies? No automobiles, no nothin'. This is handy and it's fun!"

AND he was right. Only it was not fun to have bullies like Hot-Pants and his characters around to lead kids like Willy. I looked around, and there weren't a dozen zoot suits in the hall. They were a race apart, a breed of nuisance with their feverish language and their solemnity and mumbo-jumbo. I disliked Hot-Pants and his crew.

I said, "Childish. We shall have to dispose of them. You stay away from Hot-Pants. I have an idea."

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I threaded my way across the floor. I found Zilch and led him aside.

He nearly fainted when he recognized me. He said, "Your father will moider me!"

I said, "Look. You want Nude in Rockefeller Plaza?"

Zilch gulped. "Do I want a million bucks?"

I said, "I will swap you for your Nude in Farmyard."

"Rockefeller Plaza is new! It is valuable!" he said.

"Nude in Farmyard is mother before she was married," I said truthfully. "I'll take it in trade—if you'll do me a favor."

Zilch said, "You are nuts. However . . . can I help it? What do you want—my right eye?"

I talked to him. He assented, but he said firmly, "I cannot have trouble. Twice the cops have been here. Once more and I am without license! Those zoot suiters! Those goniffs!"

"This will finish them!" I said confidently.

"You Mulraneys!" said Zilch resignedly. "Completely nuts!"

I WATCHED Hot-Pants dance out my entire quarter with Patsy. The other five of his party watched me. But when the music ran out, came Zilch, waving his arms. He spoke:

"A challenge! Mr. Tommy Benton to Hot-Pants and all the mob!"

He waved green money which I had given him—fifty dollars' worth—and that got them. They listened.

"Ten nickel notes! A wager that Mr. Benton and Miss Patsy Caspar will dance down all zoot suiters present, style and endurance to count, judges selected by vote! The losers to give up their zoot suits!"

"What?" howled Hot-Pants. "There ain't no more zoot suits!"

"That," said Mr. Zilch severely, "is the pernt! It's a dare and a bet. Fifty bucks per each against the zoot suits, which ain't worth twenny-five!"

There was pandemonium. Patsy stood beside me and said, "Well!"

I said, "Are you game, Patsy?"

She said, "Why—yes, I'm game."

I said, "You dance so well . . . I thought you could . . ."

"I took ballet under Scygony," she said flatly. "While I was at Hunter. I used to date a boy named Cézanne Mulraney. Somehow you resemble him. . . ."

"Heh-heh!" said I quickly. "Coincidence is a great thing."

Hot-Pants came rushing over, his hair straight on end. He said, "You slimy ick! This is a trick!"

I said, "Go soak your head—and you might try some vaseline, too."

A non-zooter called mockingly, "Are you a killer-diller, or a chiller-willer, Hot-Pants? The boy's moola is on the line! Put up or shut up!"

"This alien comes in here togged to the bricks and tries to run me down!" roared Hot-Pants. "I'll show him! Fill up that gut bucket! I'll bust my conk till it's empty!"

He held conflab with his cohorts. He seized his thin brunette dead-pan. All the zoot suits were forced into it, of course. Three judges were selected, and Zilch fed the juke box with coins. Patsy said abruptly, "Let me powder my nose."

She walked away and for a brief instant I thought she was going to run out on me. When she went it was like turning out a bright light. I bit my fingers and Willy came over.

Willy said, "Watch 'em, Tommy. They'll gang up."

"I expect it." Patsy was gone too long. I suffered.

The judges were waiting. Hot-Pants was mouthing.

Then Patsy came back. I leaped toward her, filled with joy. She said, "I'm ready, Tommy. Let's have fun."

I said, "That's it. That's what they don't do! They just don't have any fun!"

We were on the floor. I poised, looking into Patsy's violet eyes. She winked one of them and smiled. I went into a full pivot, whirling her. I set a ballet pattern, exaggerating with flat-footed postures and the zoot suit did the rest. It was jitterbugging with the stops all out. It was vulgar but funny.

Patsy was a sprite. Once involved, she gave out with everything, all gay abandon, her short skirt flapping in the breeze of our outlandish maneuvers.

I could catch glimpses of Hot-Pants. The others fell rapidly by the wayside as the judges eliminated them for lack of form, but Hot-Pants went on. He was crude but original. He did gym stuff to music. He twirled his thin brunette as though she were a baton. He had stamina and imagination.

BUT we were having fun. In a Texas Stomp we interpolated taps, and then I got the center of the floor and broke loose with cartwheels. I did them in place, a dozen in a row. Patsy shagged, knees bent, counting me out.

I came up. Patsy went into slow cartwheels of her own on the off-beat. Applause broke out, sharp, spontaneous. We had them, and what fun it was!

We forgot Hot-Pants, the contest, everything. We vied with each other inventing routines out of ballet and tap. We stole Hot-Pants' gym stuff in front rolls and back nip-ups. We never lost a beat of the hot music.

I moved close and took Patsy by the hips. I heaved, and she went aloft, and I held her over my head. I whirled, starting in the corner, skirting the four edges of the floor, beating it out in jitterbug time, breaking it down and stomping on the runs.

The judges were applauding. Hot-Pants was beaten. I knew it, and got ready to come out of the routine. I saw Hot-Pants make a gesture at some one behind me. I tried to hurry.

A FOOT dug at my ankle, handcuffing my feet. I staggered and fell forward. I heaved, throwing Patsy away, hoping against hope that she would land on her feet and only sprain an ankle. I staggered, widdershins. I saw Willy come racing out of the crowd, his face white. I saw Patsy fall upon Willy and roll on the floor.

There were zoot suits around me, ganging up. Zilch grabbed my elbow and said, "No fight! I can't have it, Mr. Mulraney! The cops . . ."

But I didn't care. They might have hurt Patsy. I clubbed a couple of them out of the way. Hot-Pants was coming, and there were too many of them, but my temper was gone then. I put down my head and started to buck the whole mob.

There was a sudden clatter of ascending feet. Then men marched, and a familiar voice called, "Tommy! Front and center, Tommy!"

The crowd parted, frozen. Up the stairs and into the hall came the parade. Five blue uniforms marched abreast. Five very similar faces glared threats. Mother stepped to one side, quite pleased with the effect. Father advanced, grinning, his shirt open, his brawny blacksmith's arms bared. He said:

"Some get-up, kid! Can I have me one of those outfits?"

"Sorry, father," I said. "It's a spot of trouble!"

"Of course," said father comfortably. "It always is!"

Hot-Pants bawled, "Them sailors ain't allowed to fight! Go get 'em, cats!"

Father said, "Only these few?"

I said, "The big one is mine, father."

They came. Father seized upon them. He banged heads together while Picasso, Matisse, El Greco, Cézanne, Gauguin, and mother watched with interest, never breaking formation. He wrecked the vanguard and that let me have Hot-Pants.

He was a ham-and-beaner. He came in with a straight left lead and I slipped it. He tried his right, but he was slow. I took it on the neck and gave him one and two and then I propped him off. It was easy to measure his button. I let him have both barrels. He fell on his face. It made me very happy.

Father said, "Too easy. Sure is a pretty suit, Tommy!"

Zilch came up. He stuttered, "Tommy wins! Judges say so. Wins all the zoot suits. Overalls I will give them from the last barn dance. Get rid of zoot suits!"

"Too bad!" said father. "They're cute!"

The aliens certainly had fun stripping the boys. When all the garments were piled, Patsy, Willy, and Lily had gathered around. I said, "Burn 'em in the incinerator." It was my show and I was hanging onto it.

But father said, "Why, Tommy! Burn good goods?"

The photographers were right there. A dozen of them. Father made a speech. He donated my zoot suits to the salvage committee. The flashlights boomed.

That's the Mulraneys. Of course I got in the foreground this time. With Patsy and Willy and Lily. Father is scrupulously fair. And people noticed Patsy, anyway, among all those Mulraneys. She is that beautiful.

I GOT her alone later. I said, "You phoned them. You knew I was Tommy Mulraney."

"Willy told me, when I asked," she said. "You look like Cézanne. Only smarter. Cézanne always said you were the cleverest Mulraney!"

"He did!" I almost let go of her. "He did not!"

"Said you could lick any of them—except your father. Said you were a boy prodigy, only they held you down, sort of, for fear of giving you a big head. Aren't they wonderful?"

I said, "See here, now! Are you going to marry the Mad Mulraneys or are you going to marry me?"

"Well," she said judiciously, "your father has already kissed me eight times. And Cézanne asked me for a date on his next leave—after the wedding."

I gave up. You can't do anything about the Mulraneys. They haunt you. Since I got into the Coast Guard under Dempsey, teaching commando tactics, I don't mind so much. The zoot-suit story in the papers helped me on that, anyway. . . .

You ought to see Willy harden up out on the Island. And that Hot-Pants can break a strangle hold with éclat. I'm really glad I was once a hep cat! Even if it did cost me my Nude in Rockefeller Plaza!

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WAR IS THE ART OF FINDING WAYS TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

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United States and British war chiefs meet at Casablanca.

ONE of the curious aspects of the war is the generally low batting averages of the military experts and commentators who day by day tell us what's going to happen and why.

Their estimates of the military situation usually sound logical and well reasoned. They draw conclusions on the basis of what they consider the possible and the impossible. What throws them, however, is the fact that all the big military and naval accomplishments of the war have been brought about by doing the impossible.

For example: It was said the Germans could not possibly get an army into Norway across the Skagerrak, or maintain it after it reached there; it was impossible for Hitler's legions to cross the flooded Dutch lowlands; the Ardennes Forest could not be traversed by armored forces; the British could not possibly get their army off the Dunkerque beaches; it was impossible for the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor or for an army to get down through the jungles of the Malay Peninsula. All these things were done and the dope of the experts upset thereby.

Therefore it is unlikely any one can accurately foretell the coming military moves of either side. In our own camp and in that of our enemies brainy men are scheming day and night to do the impossible. So, when you hear we are unable to attack Japan directly because it isn't possible to get near enough, don't get pessimistic. You can be sure ways of accomplishing this are constantly under exploration. When you hear a German bombing attack on our east coast cities is impossible, check up on your stirrup pump and sand pails. The Nazis, too, are daring planners and clever doers.

The one thing we can be sure of is that future military action will be startling and unexpected and probably not at all as our experts have pegged it. The United Nations are entering an era during which our armed forces will repeatedly accomplish the impossible and greatly change the character and probable length of the war.

The defense of their European fortress has been carefully planned by the Nazis on the basis of what they consider the possible and the impossible. It is an even bet their calculations in this respect are no sounder than were our own.

We will invade Europe. We will attack Japan. We will do the impossible—and very soon.

Paul Hunter

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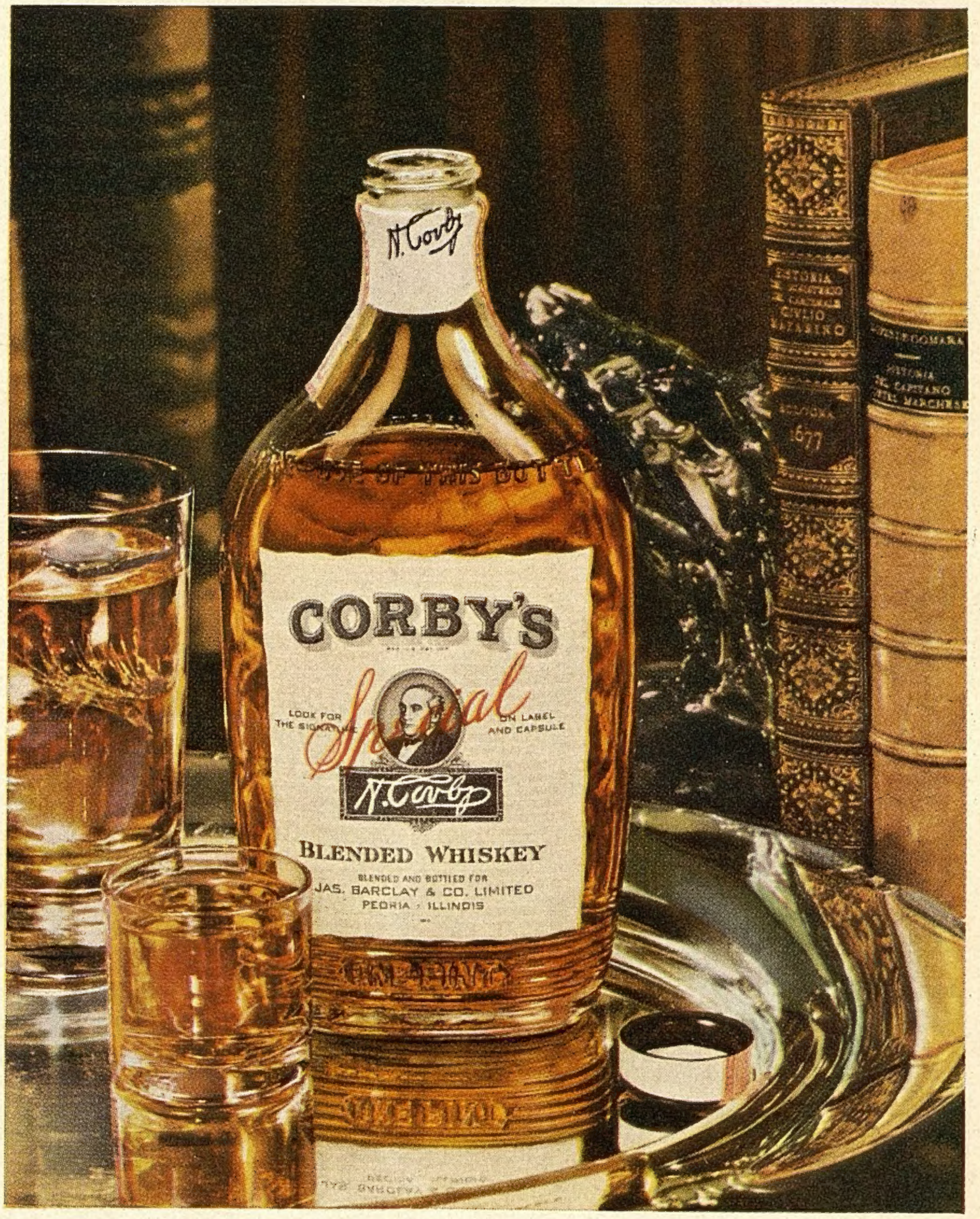
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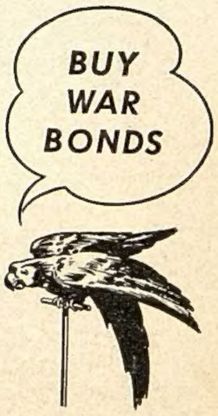
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